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A

PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY,

IN SEVERAL

Select Discourses

UPON THE

PRINCIPAL HEADS OF CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

PROTESTANTS AND PAPISTS:

BEING WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED

By the most eminent Divines of the Church of England,

CHIEFLY IN THE REIGN OF KING JAMES II.

COLLECTED BY

THE RIGHT REV. EDMUND GIBSON, D.D.

SUCCESSIVELY LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN AND LONDON,

[B. 1669, D. 1748.]

CAREFULLY REVISED AND EDITED

FOR THE BRITISH SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES
OF THE REFORMATION,

BY

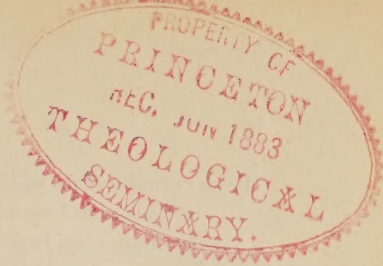
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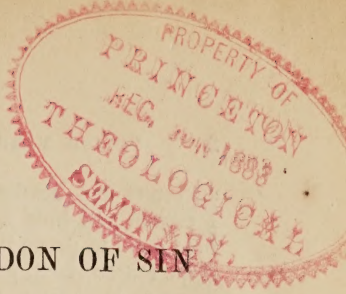
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THE POPISH
METHODS FOR THE PARDON OF SIN
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BOOK VI.
UPON THE HEAD OF PURGATORY.

A DISCOURSE OF PURGATORY.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is so near a connexion between the two points of Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead, as they are now established in the Church of Rome, that it is impossible to state the one as we ought, without entering on some consideration of the other. It has been so much the rather thought fit to give an account to the world of both these, in that the opinions of the primitive Fathers touching the state of the souls departed, and the early practice of praying for the dead founded thereupon, being not well understood by the generality now-a-days, seem to give our adversaries a greater pretence to antiquity in these points, than in most others that are in debate betwixt us.

For what concerns the latter of these, I shall in the next discourse say what I suppose may be sufficient to shew, how little grounds the ancient custom of praying for the dead in the primitive ages of Christianity, will afford to the practice of those who pretend to be their followers in the same custom now. As to the business of Purgatory, which is our present concern, we willingly allow it to have been of very venerable antiquity; and to have exceeded not only our Reformation, but even Christianity itself, for some hundreds of years. The truth is, the Church of Rome is beholden for this doctrine, as well as for many other things in her religion, to her worthy

ancestors the heathen poets and philosophers ; and though I cannot tell how far Cardinal Bellarmine's* argument will hold good to prove it from thence to have been the dictate of right reason itself, because this might engage us to give up the cause to Paganism, not only in the points of the worship of images and inferior deities, &c. which perhaps the Cardinal may be content to think the voice of nature too ; but even as to all the other parts of their superstition, in which they were more universally agreed than in their notion of a purgatory ; yet for what concerns the thing itself, we do not deny but that many of them did certainly believe it.

Eusebius recounts it of Plato,† that he divided mankind into three states : some, who having purified themselves by philosophy, and excelled in holiness of life, enjoy an eternal felicity in the islands of the blest, without any labour or trouble, which neither is it possible for any words to express or any thoughts to conceive. Others, that having lived exceedingly wicked, and therefore seemed incapable of cure, he supposed were at their deaths thrown down headlong into hell, there to be tormented for ever. But now, besides these, he imagined there were a middle sort,‡ who, though they had sinned, yet had repented of it ; and therefore seemed to be in a curable condition, and these he thought went down for some time into hell too, to be purged and absolved by grievous torments : but that after that, they should be delivered from it, and attain to honours according to the dignity of their benefactors.

Now that they supposed those who were in this state, might receive help from the prayers and sacrificings of the living, the complaints of the ghosts of Elpenor in Homer,§ and of Palinurus in Virgil,|| abundantly shew. And indeed the ceremonies used for their deliverance, as described by those poets,¶ so nearly resemble the practice of the present Roman Church, that were but their poems canonical, it would be in vain for the most obstinate heretic here to contend with them.

* Bellarmine de Purgat. lib. 1. cap. 11. p. 612. Colon. 1620.

† Præparat. Evangel. lib. 11. cap. 38 p. 568. Ed. GL. Paris, 1627.

‡ *Kai oi mèn an dόzōsi mēsōs beβιωkénai, πορευθέντες ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀχέρωντα, ἀναβάντες ἃ δὴ καὶ αὐτοῖς ὀχήματά ἐστιν, ἐπὶ τοῦτον (f. τούτων) ἀφικνοῦνται εἰς τὴν λίμνην, καὶ ἐκεῖ οἰκοῦσί τε, καὶ καθαιρόμενοι, τῶν τε ἀδικημάτων διδόντες δίκας, ἀπολύονται εἰ τίς τι ἠδίκησε. Τῶν τε εὐεργεσιῶν τιμὰς φέρονται, κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἕκαστος.*

§ In Odys. 1. 12.

|| In Æneid. 1. 6.

¶ Vid. ib. Odys. 30. Virg. Æneid. 1. 5.

It must then be confessed, that our adversaries in this point have at least 400 years antiquity, not only against us, but even beyond Christianity itself. And I suppose I may, without any injury to the memories of those holy men, who have been our forerunners in the faith, say, that it was the impression which these opinions of their philosophy had made upon them, that moved them, when they became Christians, to fall into conjectures concerning the state of the soul in the time of separation, not very much different from what they had believed before.

It is not necessary to recount the errors of Origen as to this matter: who turned even hell itself into a purgatory,* and thought that not only wicked men, but the very devils too, might be so purged in it, as to come forth angels of light. St. Augustine tells us,† that the Platonics were of an opinion not much different from this, who though they would not have any sins passed unpunished, yet supposed that all punishments, whether of this life or the next, were designed to amend, and therefore that whatever pains awaited men after death, they were all purgatory. And though this conceit of Origen has been condemned by the Church as heretical, yet there remained other opinions for some centuries after, not much differing from it.‡ Some thought that “all men whatsoever should in the end be saved;” others, and among these,§ St. Jerome himself, that “all Christians should be delivered:”|| some who restrained their charity yet more, still allowed salvation to all that died within the pale of the catholic Church; to which others finally added this further condition, that they had not only stood firm to the faith, but also been charitable to the poor. Which last circumstance is the very same that Virgil,¶ from the Platonics, again required in those who should be translated to the Elysian fields; in which therefore he places not only them whose virtue and piety had entitled to that happiness, but also by their alms had made others mindful of them.

“*Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.*”

But not to insist more particularly on these things; three

* Bellarmine, l. 1. de Purgat. c. 2. [ut supra,] p. 573.

† De Civitat. Dei l. 21. c. 13. p. 793. t. 5. Lugd. 1664.

‡ See for all those, St. Austin de Civit. Dei. l. 21. c. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

§ See below Sect.

|| August. Enchirid. ad Laurent. c. 67. [ut supra,] p. 64. t. 3.

¶ Virgil. Æneid. l. 6.

opinions there seem to have been among the ancient Fathers concerning the state of men after death, more generally received.

*1. That the souls departed do not straightway go to heaven, but remain in a quiet and pleasing state, free of all troubles and pains, yet earnestly expecting their final consummation in glory.

2. Another opinion there was, which from the credulity of Papias,† became almost the universal belief of the first ages of Christianity, concerning the millenary kingdom of Christ;‡ that our blessed Saviour, before the final judgment, should come down from heaven, and raise from the dead those of the faithful whose piety had been most eminent and approved; and with them reign a thousand years at Jerusalem, in great plenty, and with extraordinary splendour; and that this was that which St. John meant by the first resurrection, and at the end whereof the other was to follow.

3. A third opinion, and that too embraced by many of the most ancient Fathers,§ was, that all men being raised up at the last day, should pass through a certain probatory fire,|| in which every man should be scorched and purified; and some be tormented more, others less, according as they had lived better or worser lives here upon earth.

Such were the opinions of the primitive Fathers as to this matter. It is evident to any one that shall please to compare these with the account I shall hereafter give of the present Roman purgatory, how vastly different they were from what is now proposed to us as an article of faith. But yet from these opinions it is, that those of that communion impose upon the unwary their pretence of antiquity for this doctrine; whilst whatever those holy men have written of a third place, mean-

* Bellarmine de Sanct. beat l. 1. c. 5. p. 713. [Colon. 1620.] Owns it to have been the opinion of Tertullian, Lactantius, and Victorinus Martyr: but Sixtus Senensis more fairly confesses it of many others. Bibl. lib. 6. annot. 345. p. 714. edit. 1626. Colon. 4to. Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Clemens, Origen, Prudentius, Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, Theodoret, &c.

† See Eusebius Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 39. [p. 112.] edit. Valesii. [Par. 1659]

‡ Justin Martyr contr. Tryph. p. 89. C. Edit. Henr. Steph. Gr.—Irenæus vid. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 39. [Ibid.] Tertulian passim, &c.

§ This is asserted by almost all the Fathers of the Primitive Church.

|| Δοκιμαστικόν.

ing the place of sequester* before mentioned ; but especially of the purgatory fire† at the end of the world, they presently apply it all to their own fancy, and which in those first ages found no manner of entertainment.

It is, I know, generally pretended by those of the other communion, that St. Augustine at least began to favour their opinion. And indeed I will not deny but that he does sometimes speak of a purgatory after this life ; but yet so, as that it refers either to the same purgation we before spake of, at the end of the world ; or else to that grief,‡ which he imagined those souls who had been passionately tied to the things of this world, might still retain in their place of sequester : and which he therefore thought to be the meaning of that obscure place of St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 12, so confidently produced by our adversaries on all occasions, in favour of their doctrine. But all this he proposes with so much doubt and uncertainty, as plainly shews it to have been in this Father's time so far from an article of faith, that he durst not affirm any thing at all concerning it.

Thus then had the Roman doctrine of purgatory no manner of foundation in the Primitive Church. About 600 years after Christ, Pope Gregory the Great first began to give countenance to it. The public practice of praying for the dead continuing still in force in the Church, and those opinions of the primitive Fathers upon which that was first established, being now no longer received with that universal belief they had heretofore been, it was but natural to seek out some other grounds for a practice, which they saw so generally received, and yet could not well tell what account to give of the reason of it. Let us add this, that about that time a sad barbarity began everywhere almost to overspread the world : the Goths and Lombards in Italy, the Franks and Burgundians in France, the Vandals and West Goths in Spain, the Saxons in Britain, destroying almost all learning out of the world. From henceforth miracles and visions governed the Church : the flames of *Ætna* and *Vesuvius* were thought on purpose to have been kindled to torment departed souls. Some were seen broiling upon gridirons, others roasting upon spits, some burning before a fire, others shivering in the water, or smoking in a

* 1st Opinion.

† 3rd Opinion.

‡ Vid. August. loc. supr. citat. *Enchirid.* cap. 67. [vol. 6. p. 221. Par. 1685.] ad Dulcit quæst. 1, &c.

chimney. The very ways to purgatory were now discovered ; one in Sicily, another in Pozzueto, a third nearer home, in Ireland. One found out by the help of an angel, another of the devil. Insomuch that Pope Gregory himself was carried away with these illusions, and which some are not ashamed, even at this day, to support.

By these means came purgatory first established in the Roman Church, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries : but yet, still the article continued rude and unpolished. Pope Gregory discovered how certain souls, for their punishment, were confined to baths and such like places on earth, but he had not, as yet, found out any one common place for them to be tormented in, in hell. Nay, for some ages after, it seems not to have been risen to a matter of certainty, so far was it yet from being an article of faith. Insomuch that in the twelfth century, many doubted of it, as we may gather by that expression of Otto Frisingensis,* Ann. 1146 : "That there is in hell a place of purgatory, wherein such as are to be saved, are either only troubled with darkness, or decocted with the fire of expiation, some (says he) do affirm ;" plainly enough implying, that all did not believe it.

It is not necessary to say, what opposition this novel invention met with in the several centuries in the Latin Church, from Claude, bishop of Turin, in the ninth century, from Peter Bruges and Henry his successor at Toulouse ; from the Waldenses in France and Piedmont, among whom this doctrine was never received, and who are therefore condemned by Cardinal Bellarmine himself,† on this account. I will rather observe, that the Eastern Churches have continued all along free from this error. For, however the Pope and his ministers so far prevailed with the Greeks in the Council of Florence,‡ as to persuade them to yield to a kind of pretended union in this matter ; yet both their apology penned by Marcus Eugenius,§ archbishop of Ephesus, and presented to Cardinal Cusan, and the deputies of the Council of Basil|| the year

* Lib. 8. Chron. cap. 26. *Esse apud inferos locum Purgatorium, in quo salvandi vel tenebris tantum afficiantur, vel expiationis igne decoquantur, quidam asserunt, [fol. xcix. p. 2. Argent. 1515.]*

† Bellar. de Purg. l. 1. cap. 2. p. 571, 572.

‡ Session 25ta. Counc. Labb. tom. 13. p. 492. et p. 1135. [Lut. Par. 1672.]

§ Vid. apud Sixt. Senens. Bibl. l. 6. Annot. 259 [ut supra.] p. 667.

|| June 14, 1438.

before, wherein they positively declare, “that they neither had received any such doctrine from their ancestors, and therefore neither would they ever accept it;” plainly shews they had no such tradition amongst them; and the proceedings of the same Marcus, and of the Greek Church after, neither of which would be drawn to consent to this union, more fully confirm it. And it is well known how the Christians* of Asia and Africa do not at this day consent with the Roman Church in this point, as some of their own authors confess; though others not so ingenuous, would endeavour to persuade the contrary.

But however this be, purgatory is now become an article of faith, and of too comfortable an importance to be easily parted with; nor have I the vanity to hope I shall be able to argue those men out of it,† who, by this craft, gain their living, and will, no doubt, therefore, be as zealous in defence of it, as ever Demetrius was of the great goddess Diana upon the same account. But for those whose interest it rather is to be freed from these terrors after death, which serve only to enrich the priests, and keep the laity all their lives in fear and subjection; I hope to satisfy them, that these are only imaginary flames, invented for gain, established upon false grounds, and kept up by artifice and terrors to delude the people, but which themselves, many of them, no more believe, than did that great Cardinal, who minded one day to pose his chaplain,‡ and proposed this question to him, “How many masses would serve to fetch any soul out of purgatory?” to which, when he appeared, as well he might, unable to reply, the Cardinal thus pleasantly solved the doubt, “that just so many masses would serve to fetch a soul out of purgatory, as snow-balls would serve to heat an oven.”

But it is time now to come to a closer examination of all these things, and in order thereunto, let us first see:—

* *Histoire Critique*, p. 5. 20 Edit. Franckfort, 1684, for the Greeks, Id. p. 69. Cites Gabriel Sionita, affirming the same of the Melchites, *Purgatorium nullum existere pessime crediderunt*. Id. p. 72. That the Georgians believe a Purgatory, but not such as the C. R. See concerning the Armenians, p. 141. Job Ludolph. *Hist. Æthiop. Lat.* shews the same of the Ethiopians, that they deny a Purgatory, l. 3. c. 5. n. 67, 68. See Bellarm. l. 1. de Purg. cap. 2. [ut supra.] p. 572.

† Acts xix. 25, &c.

‡ C. Richelieu.

SECT. I.

What it is that the Church of Rome means by Purgatory.

HAD the doctrine of Purgatory been as clearly explained by the Council of Trent, as it was peremptorily defined in it, we should have had the less need to make the present inquiry.* In Pope Pius IVth's Creed, it is only said in general terms, that "they constantly believe that there is a purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful." Nor is their decree concerning it at all more clear; it only adds, "that they are assisted by the suffrages of the faithful,† but especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the mass; and therefore, that the bishops should diligently take care that the wholesome doctrine of purgatory, delivered by the holy Fathers and Councils, should be believed, held, and taught by all the faithful in Christ."

Indeed, in the foregoing sessions,‡ we find two other things defined with reference to this doctrine, but such as conduce very little to the better understanding of it. 1st, It anathematizes those who shall say, "that after the grace of justification, the fault and guilt of eternal punishment is so remitted to the penitent sinner, that there remains no guilt of a temporal punishment to be paid by him, either now, or hereafter in purgatory, before he can attain to the kingdom of heaven." And, 2ndly, in their Canons of the Mass, they resolve, "If any one shall say that the mass is not a propitiatory sacrifice, or that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead,§ for their sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities, let him be anathema."

And accordingly, the Bishop of Meaux, in his Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church, contains himself within the same bounds: "Those (says he) who depart this life in grace and charity,|| but nevertheless indebted to the Divine justice some pains which it reserved, are to suffer them in the other life.—This is what the Council of Trent proposes to our belief, touching the souls detained in purgatory, without

* See it at the End of the Council of Trent, p. 225. Edit. Labbe, Paris, 1667. Fol.

† Session 25. [Ibid.] p. 174. ‡ Session 6. Can. 30. [Ibid.] p. 47.

§ Session 22. Can. 3. [Ibid.] p. 135.

|| Expos. Bish. Condom, sect. 8. p. 15.

defining in what their pains consist, or many other such like things."

The Misrepresenter calls it, "A place or state where souls departing this life,* pardoned as to the eternal guilt or pain, yet obnoxious to some temporal penalty, or with guilt of some venial faults, are purged and purified before their admittance into heaven."

Alexander Natalis is yet more precise : he distinguishes what is of faith in this matter, and what not, and thus resolves : † that it does not at all belong to the faith, "1st, Concerning the place, whether it be in this world, or upon earth, or in the dark air where the devils are : or in the hell of the damned ; or in some place underneath nearer the earth, that the souls are purged. 2ndly, Concerning the quality of those sensible pains which the souls held in purgatory undergo ; whether it be true and corporeal fire, or whether darkness and sorrow, or any other torment inflicted by the justice of God, punishing them after a wonderful, yet true manner. 3rdly, Concerning the duration of these purgatory pains, how long the souls are detained there. For though Soto thought that no soul continued in purgatory above ten years, yet it is a matter altogether uncertain how many years those pains shall last.—The only thing therefore (he says) that is in controversy between the Catholics (as he calls them) and Protestants, is this, whether the faith teaches that there is a state of the dead, in which they shall be expiated by temporary punishments, and from which they may be freed, or otherwise helped by the prayers of the Church."

But though this then be all which these men suppose is to come into our inquiry ; yet I must observe, that the Catechism sent out by order of the Council of Trent, determines concerning the pains themselves, that they are caused by fire. "There is (says that Catechism‡) a purgatory fire, in which the souls of the faithful being tormented for a certain time, are expiated ; that so a passage may be opened for them into their eternal country, into which no defiled thing can enter." So that I do not see how they can choose but allow the pains of purgatory to be determined by them to the particular kind of fire.

* Papist Misrepr. sect. 23, p. 30.

† In Dissert. Sæc. 4. dissert. 41. p. 352. [Par. 1679.

‡ Catechism. ad Paroch. part. 1. Artic. 5. sect. 5. page 41. Colon. 1684.

St. Thomas is yet more precise ; not only that it is fire in which the souls are tormented, but that it is the very same fire that torments the damned in hell,* and the just in purgatory. And Bellarmine† himself confesses, that almost all their divines teach, that the damned and the souls in purgatory are tormented in the same fire, and in the same place.

But yet, since they suppose that nothing ought to come into this dispute, but just what is defined in the Council of Trent ; we will take the state of the question according to their own desire, and inquire only in the words of Cardinal Bellarmine,

“ Whether there be any such place (as they suppose) in which, as in a prison, the souls are purged after this life, which were not fully purged before : that so being cleansed, they may be able to go into heaven, where no unclean thing shall enter.”

SECT. II.

That there is no ground for such a Purgatory in the Holy Scripture.

To demonstrate this, it will not, I presume, be expected that I should shew the weakness of all those places, which though some of their controvertists have alleged, yet the more learned among them freely confess to have nothing to the purpose in them. Cardinal Bellarmine has put together nineteen several texts out of both Testaments ; but yet was far from thinking them all to his purpose ;‡ confessing either of all, or at least of all out of the Old Testament, except the first, that they are but probable arguments. Of these Alexander Natalis utterly rejects sixteen ; and one he mentions not, as indeed he needed not to do it, when Bellarmine himself had set a particular mark upon it,§ as impertinent.

The Misrepresenter, unwilling to see his cause reduced to two only places of holy Scripture, restores again to its authority,|| one of those which Natalis had rejected,¶ and adds another which they had all of them overlooked, but very unfor-

* In 4. Sent. dist. 21. qu. 1. art. 1. [vol. 12. p. 499. col. 1. Venet. 1780.] † Bellarm. de Purg. lib. 2. cap. 6. [ut supra.] p. 646.

‡ De Purgat. l. 1. c. 3. [Ibid.] p. 578. a.

§ Ibid. cap. 8. arg. ult. sect. Utuntur nostri, p. 601. D.

|| 1 Cor. iii. 15.

¶ 1 Pet. iii. 15.

tunately : for that, first, they have ever been esteemed* two of the most difficult and obscure places of all the New Testament ; and therefore, certainly must be very unfit to build an article of faith upon. And then, 2ndly, for St. Austin, upon whose authority he would be thought to allege them ; it is evident that he utterly mistook the design of that Father, if he thought that he understood them of the Roman purgatory, as both his words evidently shew, and his own masters, Natalis† has ingenuously confessed for the one, and Bellarmine‡ for the other. So that then I may reasonably presume to have answered the design of the present section, if I can give a fair account of those two places which they all agree to be the principal supports of this doctrine ; § and from whence some of them doubt not to say, it may be demonstratively concluded.

Now the first of these, is that noted passage in the 2 Maccab. cap. xii. where (they tell us) it is said, || “ That money was sent to Jerusalem, that sacrifices might be offered for the slain ; and it is recommended as a holy cogitation, to pray for the dead.” This, not only Bellarmine¶ ranks in front of his Scripture proofs, but the Misrepresenter has again advanced it, and Natalis doubts not to call it a demonstrative testimony.

But to all this our exceptions are very just :

1st, That the book itself is not of sufficient authority to establish a matter of faith.

2ndly, That if it were, yet is not the text, by any means, clear for the proof of that, to which it is applied by them.

1st, For the authority of the Book itself.

Thus much our adversaries themselves confess,** and I think we need desire no more ; that this book was never received by the Jews†† as canonical : that St. Jerome therefore rejected it out of the canon of the Christian Church : that it was not of a long time‡‡ after received into it ; insomuch, that in Pope

* Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. c. 5. [Ibid.] p. 582. A. Natalis Alex. dissert. 41. sæc. 4. [ut supra.] p. 378.

† Vid. in loc. 1 Cor. iii. 15. [ut supra.] p. 377, 379.

‡ Bellarm. de Christi Anima, lib. 4. cap. 13. p. 455. per tot.

§ Natal. Alex. in loc. [ut supra.] p. 362. || Misrepres. n. 23. p. 28.

¶ Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. c. 3. Misr. Sect. 23. p. 28. Natalis ub. supr. p. 364. ** See Mons. du Pin. Biblioth. dissert. prel. p. 59, &c.

†† Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. cap. 3. p. 575. Natalis Alex. Sec. 4. par. 3. dissert. 41. [ut supra.] p. 365. ‡‡ Bellarm. ibid. p. 576. A.B.

Gregory the Great's time,* that is 600 years after Christ, it was lawful to doubt of its authority ; for indeed, that Pope himself did not receive it as canonical. And sure then it ought not to be thought unreasonable in us to doubt of the authority of a book, which being a part of the Old Testament, was yet never received by the Jews as canonical, and of whose authenthicalness therefore, the primitive Christian Church, for the first 600 years, declared themselves altogether unsatisfied. But,

2ndly, To allow the book the credit which they desire ; yet still the text is by no means clear for the proof of that to which it is applied by them. The story itself is this, "That when Judas, the day after the battle, came to bury the bodies of them that were slain,† they found under the coats of every one that had been killed, things consecrated to the idols of the Jamnites, which was forbidden to the Jews by the law. This discovered to them the cause of their death, and how they were slain by God for their sin. Hereupon Judas, and all his men, betook themselves to prayer, and besought God that the sin might wholly be put out of remembrance. And Judas, upon this occasion, exhorted the people to keep themselves, by their example, from the like sin ; and lastly, he made a collection among them of a sum of money, and sent it to Jerusalem, to offer a sin-offering unto the Lord."

This is the story, and the design of all is very easy ; that Judas, considering the danger he had been in by the sin of these men, prayed to God that it might not be imputed to the people, and offered a sin-offering for the congregation according to the law ; remembering what the whole people had once suffered in the like case for Achan's transgression.‡

But our adversaries will have this sin-offering to have been for the dead, and the history expressly says it was so. I answer, 1st, The history says no more than what we have set down, that Judas did this : for the rest, it is the conjecture of the historian, not an historical narration of what design Judas had in it. Now that this could not have been his design, is evident : 2ndly, In that, neither the law of Moses, nor any other part of the holy Scripture, makes any mention of any such sacrifice, either prescribed or allowed of, for the dead. And 3rdly, Had the law in some cases approved of sacrifices

* Canus, l. 2. c. 10. ad. 4.

† 2 Maccab. xii. 39, &c.

‡ Joshua vii.

for the dead, yet certainly it could not have done it in this, idolatry being one of those sins for which there was no offering allowed, nor any atonement to be made for it.

But what then is it, that this historian designed? I reply, it was this: that Judas, by this sacrifice, made an atonement for the dead, to the end, that their sin being forgiven, they might have a happy resurrection. This he expressly declares, ver. 44, 45, "For considering (says the historian) that there is an excellent reward laid up for those that die godly, which was a holy and godly thought;* he therefore made an expiation for the dead, that they might be absolved from their sin." For many of the Jews then, as some Christians have done since, thought offerings might be made for the forgiveness of those sins after death, that were not forgiven before. Therefore, seeing that these soldiers died in a grievous sin before they had time to repent, the historian supposed that Judas might have designed this offering to expiate their offence, that so they might obtain a happy resurrection. But now, this was only the conjecture of the historian, and as before we have seen very ill grounded, to be sure far enough distant from the Roman purgatory. For 1st, *This* respected the future resurrection, *that* the present sufferings of the dead. 2ndly, The prayers here spoken of were offered for men who died in a mortal sin; but the Papists deny that any such go to purgatory, or can receive any benefit from the prayers of the living. 3rdly, Whatever becomes of all the rest; how was it possible that these prayers should have been designed for the slain to deliver them out of purgatory, when, if we will believe the Papists themselves, their souls were not there, but either in hell or in the limbus, where they supposed the souls of the ancient Fathers were detained, till our Saviour Christ descending thither, set them free.

So that which way soever then we consider this passage, it cannot give us any manner of satisfaction. If we look upon it as a part of that history, the book is not canonical; nor was ever esteemed so by the Jews, or by the Christians of the first 600 years. If we take it as the history of what Judas did, this respected not the dead at all; nor by consequence, can it belong to purgatory. If, according to the opinion of the relator, it regards the dead indeed, but then with reference to

* Εἴτ' ἐμβλέπων τοῖς μετ' εὐσεβείας κοιμωμένοις κάλλιστον ἀποκείμενον χαριστήριον, ὁσία καὶ εὐσεβὴς ἐπίνοια. Ὅθεν περὶ τεθυνηκότων τὸν ἐξιλασμόν ἐποιήσατο τῆς ἀμαρτίας ἀπολυθῆναι.

their future resurrection, not their present punishment ; and so is still impertinent. If, finally, according to the hypothesis of the Papists themselves, it is utterly impossible it should belong to purgatory, because there was, as yet, no such place, and therefore these soldiers could not be there, or by any sacrifices be delivered from thence. And this, I hope, may be a sufficient reply to this first passage.

The other, from whence they also tell us their doctrine of purgatory may be demonstratively concluded, is in the xiith of St. Matth. ver. 32, where our Saviour, speaking of the sin against the Holy Ghost, tells us, that "it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

He would, I believe, be thought to make a very strange conclusion, that should, without more ado, argue thus abruptly from this passage, "Therefore there is a purgatory:" and indeed, they themselves are sensible of it. And therefore Bellarmine confesses, that according to the rules of logic, purgatory cannot be inferred from hence: but, according to the rules of prudence, he thinks it may, because that otherwise, he says, Christ must be said to have spoken improperly, which we ought not to suppose he did. But if there be nothing in this place to prove purgatory, according to the rules of logic, I suppose it must be some mistake then, in that which he told us before, that it may be demonstratively inferred from thence. For as for the rule of prudence, that will, at most, make it but very probable.

But indeed, this rule will fail them, as well as the other, as we shall evidently see in examining the proofs which they make from it. Now their argument lies thus: "Our Saviour Christ says, that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be remitted, neither in this world, nor in that to come: we must therefore suppose, that some sins shall be remitted in the world to come, or else our Saviour spake improperly, which, according to the rules of prudence, we may not say. Now the world to come, must signify the state of the soul between the day of every man's death, and the final resurrection, because, that after that, no sins shall be remitted: and it must be to those who are in a middle state, because those who are blessed, are already forgiven; and those who are damned, shall never be remitted."

This is the sum of their arguing from this place: but now, if it appear that we can have no manner of assurance of any of these suppositions; much more if it be clear that not one of

them is true ; then I presume it will follow, that neither is it prudentially credible that our Saviour here intended to establish a purgatory, but rather altogether certain that he did not.

1st, Then : Our Saviour says, “that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that to come ;” therefore, they conclude, some sins shall be forgiven in the world to come.

I answer : It is most certain that some sins shall be forgiven in the world to come, even all those that are forgiven in this, and for which, therefore, God shall not call us to account at the last day. As if one should say, to him that repents and believes, his sins shall not be imputed neither in this world, nor in the world to come ; that is, they shall never be imputed. And so both St. Mark and St. Luke interpret the phrase,* “He shall not be forgiven,” says the one ; “he shall not be forgiven for ever,” says the other : what is this to purgatory ?

But our adversaries are more acute : “Christ says, the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that to come ; therefore some sins that are not forgiven in this world, shall be forgiven in the world to come.” This, indeed, is no consequence, according to the rules of logic, as Bellarmine acknowledges ; but how then does it follow ? Because that otherwise, our Saviour Christ would have spoken improperly, which, according to the rule of prudence, we ought not to say. The Cardinal might have added, according to the rule of civility and good breeding too. But still, how does this appear ? Why, because that otherwise it would have been impertinent to say, that it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come, if no sins should be forgiven in the world to come, that are not forgiven in this.

I answer, 1st, He might have said it to exaggerate his speech, and so the better enforce the heinousness of the crime ; and it is a thing very ordinary, on such occasions, to use many words, when one would have been sufficient ; but, 2ndly, He might, and certainly did do it, to prevent the mistake of the Jews, and cut off all hopes of pardon for this sin : two things there were, which they understood by the **עלם הבא**, or world to come ; the kingdom of the Messiah, and the state after death ; and in both these, they thought a remission might be had for some sins, that were not otherwise to be forgiven :

* Mark iii. 29. Luke xii. 10.

our blessed Saviour, therefore, to take away all hopes of remission for this sin, and make the deeper impression upon their minds, bids them not flatter themselves with any such fond expectations ; that this was a sin that should never be forgiven them, neither in this world, nor in the world to come ; *i. e.* neither now nor in the kingdom of the Messiah ; neither in the hour of death, nor in the day of judgment. But,

2ndly, They suppose, that the world to come, must signify the time between every man's death, and the general resurrection.

But now, for this, there is no manner of ground, either in the holy Scripture, or in the language of the Jews ; nor can it be with any propriety so esteemed. For the world to come, cannot be supposed to begin till this world ends, *i. e.* till the time be, that, according to their own confession,* purgatory shall be no more. Whatever then our Saviour Christ means by the world to come, or however sins shall be remitted there, it cannot be understood of purgatory, which now is in this present world, and in the other shall be destroyed.

3rdly, They suppose, lastly, that the persons whose sins shall be forgiven, are not the perfectly just, in whom there is no spot of sin remaining ; nor yet the damned, whose sins are irremissible ; but such as are in a middle state, *i. e.* that depart with sanctifying grace and charity, but yet guilty of some lesser sins, of which they are to be purged.

I reply, 1st, That there is not a word of all this so much as hinted in the text ; and any one might from thence, as reasonably conclude for either of the other kinds, as they do for this middle sort. For as concerning the just, it is not certainly at all absurd to say, that their sins are then forgiven, when they are finally acquitted at God's tribunal, as they shall be in the world to come. And for the wicked, since we here are told that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is the only sin that shall not be forgiven ; nay, our Saviour expressly says, that all other sins shall be remitted ; it may, with much more agreement to the text, follow, that all men, be their sins what they will, shall have grace of repentance, whereby they may be pardoned in the world to come, the blasphemers of the Holy Ghost alone excepted, than that those only shall be forgiven, who die with venial sins. But,

* Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. c. 5. [ut supra,] p. 586. D. Dico, post novissimum judicium non fore Purgatorium.

2ndly, What have we here to do with the remission of sins? Purgatory is a place, not where sins are remitted, but where they are punished with the greatest severity; nay, what is still more, punished after they are remitted; nay, what is still more extraordinary, therefore punished, because they are remitted. For if the guilt were not remitted, the sinner could not go to purgatory, nor have the favour of being punished there. And therefore it is utterly impertinent, from the remission of some sins in the world to come, to conclude there is a place where all sins, even the least, are exacted, and that so rigidly, that there is no escaping thence, till either, by their selves, or their friends, they have paid "the uttermost farthing."*

In short, if we will conclude any thing as concerning the remission of sins from this, the rules both of logic and prudence will direct us to make one part of the opposition answer to the other; and then it will stand thus. The sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be at all forgiven, whether as to guilt or punishment, but shall be avenged to all eternity. Therefore all other sins, upon repentance, shall be forgiven, both as to the fault and punishment, so as not to be required, neither now or hereafter. Any other remission than this, the Scripture nowhere speaks of, nor does this text infer it. And to suppose without proof that there is any other, is in good earnest to beg the question.

The sum of all is what I before said:† that our blessed Saviour intended by this phrase, to cut off all hopes of pardon for this sin, by telling them that it should not be remitted, neither by any expiation in this life, nor by any extraordinary grace of God in the age of the Messiah, or in the life after this; which are the only notions of the world to come that the Jews knew, and in both which they fancied some sins not elsewhere remissible, might be forgiven.

And this may suffice to have been said to shew, how far the holy Scripture is from establishing this doctrine as an article of faith; for sure, if these places which they call demonstrative, are so little to the purpose, we can have no great expectation from the rest, which themselves esteem but only probable proofs of it.

* Matth. v. 26.

† See Dr. Lightfoot upon the place.

SECT. III.

That the Primitive Church for 600 years, knew nothing of the Romish Purgatory.

BUT if the Scriptures be thus silent in this matter, let us see if the Fathers of the Church, in the first ages of the Gospel, received the present doctrine of purgatory as an article of their belief. I shall need to insist so much the less on this here, because the greatest part of the authorities, that are usually produced to this effect, relate not immediately to purgatory, but to prayers for the dead; and therefore will be more proper to be considered in the next discourse. Those that speak precisely to this point, are but few; and I shall take them in such order, as seems most natural for our examination.

And the first I shall mention, is Origen.* We ought so much the rather to complain of the sophistry of our adversaries in making use of his testimony; in that, either they themselves must deny that his opinion concerning purgatory was the same with theirs; or they must confess that those Fathers and Councils who condemned him as an heretic on this account, have in him pronounced their sentence also. I have before observed of this Father, that he thought there were no pains but purgatory after this life; insomuch, that after a certain time, not only all men, though never so wicked, but the devils themselves should be purified by them, and so saved in the end.† This, Bellarmine elsewhere confesses to have been his opinion, and to this, the place which he quotes out of him, clearly refers:‡ “He that is saved, is saved by fire, that so if by chance he has any thing of lead mixed in him, the fire may melt and separate it, that so all may be made pure gold.” And is not this a rare testimony for purgatory, which neither they themselves approve of, and which, both the ancient Fathers, Epiphanius, St. Jerome, St. Austin, nay, and even the fifth General Council itself, has condemned as heretical.

And what I have now said of Origen, I must in the next place affirm of another Father,§ and he the first which Bellarmine produces on this occasion, *viz.* Gregory Nyssen, who has

* Origen. † Lib. 1. de Purg. c. 2. p. 573. C. [ut supra.]

‡ Origen Homil. 6. in Exod. [vol. 2. p. 148. col. 2. Par. 1733.] Qui salvus fit, per ignem salvus fit, ut siquid forte de specie plumbi habuerit admixtum, id ignis decoquat et resolvat, ut efficiantur omnes aurum purum. Bellar. de Purg. l. 1. c. 10. [ibid.] p. 608. B.

§ Gr. Nyssen.

long since been observed as to this matter, to have favoured the heresy of Origen. Indeed we are told by Photius, that Germanus, patriarch of Constantinople, in the seventh century, wrote an apology for him,* in which he shews that this was not the opinion of Gregory Nyssen himself, but that his works had been corrupted by the followers of Origen, the better to countenance their error; whichsoever it were, it is the same thing as to the authority of his writings in this controversy: and indeed the very places cited by Bellarmine shew, that this was the purgatory he contends for: *viz.* such, in which all were to be purified, and at last saved for ever. He distinguishes two orders of men, of which, one, by the discipline of Christ, are purged here on earth,† such are the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, disciples, martyrs, and as many as preferred (says he) a virtuous life before a sensual and material enjoyment; in the other he ranks “all other men whatsoever, who shall return,” he says, “to that grace that was once given them,‡ after that, by the future discipline,” *i. e.* in the world to come, after the final judgment, “they shall have cast off in the purgatory fire their propension to matter:” for so it is in the original; and not as Bellarmine renders it, a wiping away the spots of matter in a purgatory fire after this life.

To these two I must in the next place subjoin St. Jerome,§ whom, though I will not with Ruffinus|| accuse of being involved in the error of Origen, yet Bellarmine¶ himself cannot deny him to have been charged with an opinion not very much differing from it, *viz.* “that all catholic Christians shall in the end be saved, after they have been tried and purified in the fire.” And this, the very place which they cite in favour

* Codex 233. p. 904. Ed. G. L. [Rotham. 1653.]

† Greg. Nyss. de mortuis Orat. p. 635. Τοὺς πατριάρχας τε καὶ τοὺς προφήτας, καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς τε καὶ μετ’ ἐνέινουσιν δι’ ἀρετῆς τε καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἀναδραμόντας ἐπὶ τὸ τέλειον. μαθητὰς λέγω, καὶ ἀποστόλους, καὶ μάρτυρας, καὶ πάντας τοὺς τὴν ἐν ἀρετῇ ζοῆν πρὸ τοῦ ὀλικοῦ τετιμηκότας βίου. 636. A. To. 3. Ed. GL. Paris, 1638.

‡ Ibid. p. 636. Τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν διὰ τῆς εἰς ὕστερον ἀγωγῆς ἐν τῷ καθαρσίῳ πυρὶ ἀποβαλόντων τὴν πρὸς τὴν ὕλην προσπάθειαν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἀποκληρωθεῖσαν τῇ φύσει χάριν—οὐ γὰρ εἰς αἰὶ παραμένει τῶν ἁλλοτρίων ἢ ἐπιθυμία τῇ φύσει, B. Which Bellarmine from P. Francisc. Zinus, faultily renders, Aliis autem post hanc vitam purgatorioigne materiæ labes abstergentibus. de Purg. l. 1. c. 10. [ut supra,] p. 607. § St. Hierome.

|| See Bellarm. de Purg. l. 2. c. 1. [Ibid.] p. 631. A.

¶ Ibid. 632. C.

of their purgatory, plainly shews to have been his opinion : * “ As we believe (says he) the torments of the devil, and of all that deny the faith, and of those wicked men who have said in their heart, there is no God, to be eternal : so for those who are sinners and wicked, but yet Christians, whose works are to be tried and purged in the fire, we believe that the sentence of the Judge shall be moderate, and mixed with clemency.” In which words this opinion, which the Romanists themselves confess to be erroneous, is plainly contained, *viz.* of the moderate punishment of wicked men and sinners, if Christians ; *i. e.* of their salvation after a certain time of purgation in the fire of the last judgment (for so the opposition to the eternal punishment of the others, requires us to expound it) : but for the burning of good men, whose sins are forgiven, and who depart this life in a state of charity, and in the grace of God, such as are punished in the Popish purgatory, of this there is no mention.

And the same is so evidently the meaning of the other passage alleged by Bellarmine† from this Father, that there can be no doubt of it : “ If,” says he, “ Origen says that all rational creatures are not to be destroyed, and allows repentance to the devil ; what is this to us, who say, that the devil and his companions, and all wicked and prevaricating men shall perish for ever ; and that Christians, if they are overtaken in their sins, shall be saved after punishment.”

And hitherto we have considered such passages, as the error of Origen, sufficiently different from the doctrine of the Romish purgatory, has given occasion to. But there was another opinion in the Primitive Church, which I have mentioned above, and to which many other expressions of the other Fathers do allude, *viz.* “ That all those who at the last day shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, shall be proved by a certain terrible fire, by the force of which the

* Sicut Diaboli et omnium negatorum atque impiorum, qui dixerunt in corde suo non est Deus, credimus æterna tormenta ; sic peccatorum et impiorum, et tamen Christianorum, quorum opera in igne probanda sunt atque purganda, moderatam arbitramur, et mixtam clementiæ sententiam Judicis. Comm. in Is. in fin. [vol. 4. p. 832. Veron. 1735.] Bellarm. l. 1. c. 10. [ibid.] p. 608. A.

† Bellarm. ib. p. 608. D. Hieron. lib. 1. contr. Pelag. ultr. med. [Ibid. vol. 2. p. 712.] Si autem Origenes omnes rationabiles creaturas dicit non esse perdendas, et Diabolo tribuit Pœnitentiam ; Quid ad nos, qui Diabolum et satellites ejus, omnesque impios et prævaricatores dicimus perire perpetuo ; et Christianos, si in peccato præventi fuerint, salvandos esse post pœnas ?

good and bad shall be separated, and if any evil of their past life still adheres to the good, it shall then in that purgatory fire be entirely done away."

Now to this, belong those passages that are produced on this occasion from Lactantius, Hilary, St. Ambrose, Eusebius Emisenus, and some of St. Austin himself. I shall offer one proof of this in the last instance of Cardinal Bellarmine,* St. Hilary, which he thus quotes: "An unwearied fire is to be undergone by us, in which are to be endured those grievous punishments, of a soul to be expiated from its sins."† But the whole passage is indeed this: St. Hilary, in his annotations on the 20th verse of the 119th Psalm, "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments," applies it unto the future judgment;‡ and among other observations, has this passage:§ "Seeing we must render an account for every idle word, do we desire the day of judgment, in which that unwearied fire is to be passed through? In which those grievous punishments are to be undergone for the expiating of a soul from sin? A sword shall pass through the soul of the blessed Virgin Mary, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. If that Virgin who bore God is to come into the severity of the judgment, will any one dare desire to be judged by God?" This certainly is such a testimony, as had Bellarmine ever examined it, he would have been ashamed to have produced it for a proof of purgatory.

The authority of St. Cyprian,|| as it is commonly cited by them, seems more considerable: "It is one thing to be purged from sins by a long time of torments, and to be mended a great while by fire; another by suffering to have purged all sins." But the truth is, this is as little to the purpose, as any we have yet seen. St. Cyprian, in that epistle to Antonian, defends a certain new decree of his Church, that had been made in favour of those who fell in times of persecution,

* Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. c. 10. [ibid.] p. 607, &c.

† Nobis est ille indefessus ignis obeundus, in quo subeunda sunt gravia illa expiandæ a peccatis animæ supplicia. Bell. [ibid.] p. 609.

‡ Hilar. in Psal. cxviii. Gimel. p. 865. F. 866. A. Edit. Paris, 1652.

§ An cum de omni ocioso verbo rationem simus præstituri, diem judicii concupiscimus, in quo nobis est ille indefessus ignis obeundus, in quo subeunda sunt gravia illa expiandæ a peccatis animæ supplicia? B. Mariæ animam Gladius pertransibit, ut revelentur multorum cordium cogitationes; si in judicis severitatem, capax illa Dei Virgo ventura est, desiderare quis audebit a Deo judicari? [Ibid.]

|| Cyprian. Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. c. 10. [ibid.] p. 608. D.

whereby they were admitted to penance, and by which it was feared by some, lest the Christians should be rendered more slow to suffer for the faith. In this epistle, St. Cyprian* shews Antonian, that though the Church had granted something of favour to these libellatic Christians, yet still their condition was infinitely worse than that of the martyrs, so that there was no cause to doubt, but that every one ought to prefer martyrdom, notwithstanding the new favour that was allowed to them. And then entering upon the comparison, "It is one thing (says he) to stand in expectation of pardon (as the penitents did), another to be arrived at their glory (as the martyrs were) : it is one thing, being clapt into the prison, not to go out thence till they have paid the uttermost farthing (*i. e.* not to be admitted into the Church, till they had passed through all the several parts of the penance inflicted on them), another presently to receive the reward of their faith and courage : one thing to be cleansed by a long grief for sin, and to be purged a long time by fire ; another to have purged away all sins by suffering." All which still refers to the afflictions and troubles of the penance they were to undergo, and concerning which all this discourse of St. Cyprian is ; whereas the holy martyrs, by suffering, were already cleansed from all their sins. There is nothing more ordinary, than by the phrase of *fire*, to signify any kind of afflictions : and if the conjecture of the reverend editor of the Oxford Cyprian, be accepted, as the authority of several manuscripts seems to render it exceeding probable, that instead of *diu igne*, it ought it be *diutine* : then it will follow, that this Father spoke nothing at all of fire ; but only said this, that it is infinitely better with the martyrs to be justified from all their sins in heaven, than with the penitents, be put under a long course of severe discipline for them here in the Church on earth.

And this interpretation the learned Rigaltius approves ;† and what St. Cyprian himself adds, plainly shews that it cannot refer to the Romish purgatory where, going on still with

* Cyprian. Epist. 55. Antoniano. pp. 109, 110. Edit. Oxon. [1682.] Aliud est ad veniam stare, aliud ad Gloriam pervenire ; aliud missum in carcerem non exire inde, donec solvat novissimum quadrantem, aliud statim fidei et virtutis accipere Mercedem : aliud pro peccatis longo dolore cruciatum emundari, et purgari diu igne (*f. diutine*), aliud peccata omnia passione purgasse ; aliud denique pendere in die judicii ad sententiam domini ; aliud statim a Domino Coronari.

† See his Annot. in loc. [*ibid.*] p. 109, 110.

the antithesis, he adds, "It is one thing in the day of judgment, to expect with anxiety the sentence of the Lord (as these penitents were to do); another to be presently crowned by the Lord," as these martyrs were. Now this could not be said of the souls in purgatory, who, if you believe them, are in no anxiety about their future sentence, but actually secure of their salvation, as soon as they shall be delivered from those severe, yet temporary pains in which they are.

For Gregory Nazianzen, both his scholiast Nicetas* interprets the fire he speaks of, to be that of hell, and the occasion of his words, and the persons to whom he addresses, shew it can be understood of no other. The persons were the Novatians; the occasion, to exhort them, by the fear of this punishment, to return to the communion of the Church.† Now for schismatics, if they continue obstinate in their separation, I suppose the Church of Rome will allow there shall be reserved some worser fire than that of purgatory.

The next Father, produced by Bellarmine, is St. Basil,‡ who, upon Isaiah ix. 18, says, "That sin is therefore by the prophet compared to grass, because grass is the most fruitful among herbs."§—And then he goes on in the words produced for purgatory: || "if therefore we lay open our sins by confession, we shall make this grass dry, and worthy to be devoured by the purgatory fire." Now that this purgatory fire cannot be that which the Romanists mean, is evident from this, that the sin is not devoured by that, but being first devoured by confession and repentance, is here punished in this fire. We must therefore seek out some other meaning, and for that, we can take no better than what this same commentary affords us; viz. that it signifies the Holy Spirit, operating upon the hearts of the penitent, and with his celestial fire consuming those sins, which by confession are dried, and made fit for that holy flame. So on the sixth of Isaiah, speaking of the altar which the prophet there saw, he says was signified by it, ¶ "A certain

* Gregory Nazianz. tom. 2. Op. GL. p. 1037. C. Paris, 1630.

† Greg. Naz. Homil. 39. t. 1. [Ibid.] p. 636.

‡ St. Basil. Bell. [ut supra,] p. 608. C.

§ "Οτι ἡ ἄχρωστis πολυγονώτατόν ἐστιν ἐν βοτάναις, καὶ οὐδαμοῦ καταλήγει αὐτῆς ἡ γέννησις.

|| Ἐὰν οὖν γυμνώσωμεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν διὰ τῆς ἐξομολογήσεως, ἵποιήσαμεν αὐτὴν ξηρὰν ἀξίαν τοῦ καθαρτικοῦ πυρὸς καταβρωθῆναι. Basil. in 9. Is. tom. 2. p. 216. Ed. GL. Paris, 1637.

¶ Ἐπουράνιον τι θυσιαστήριον, τοῦτ' ἐστι χωρίον καθαρισμοῦ ψυχῶν, ὅθεν ἐκπέμπεται ταῖς ἀγιαζομέναις δυνάμεσι τὸ καθάρσιον πῦρ.

celestial altar, namely, the place of the purifying of souls; from whence that purgatory fire is sent out to the sanctified powers. With this fire did the heart of Cleopas and Simon burn, when our Lord opened to them the Scriptures. With this fire are they heated, who are warmed by the Holy Ghost," &c.

As for the other passage that is alleged from the same comment,* it is so clear, that by the purging, or rather the castigating fire which he there speaks of, he understands those evils and afflictions that God was about to bring upon the Israelites for their amendment, that I shall not need say any thing more to it.

For Theodoret,† whom Bellarmine cites out of his comments on 1 Cor. iii. He is indeed, the clearest of all to their purpose: "We believe," says he,‡ "this is to be the very purgatory fire, in which the souls of the dead are tried and purged as gold in a crucible." But now the misfortune is, that Theodoret has no such words: nay, though they themselves are the editors of his works, yet have they never yet dared to insert this pretended explication into them. It is indeed, an instance of the peculiar confidence of these men, in their pretences to antiquity, not only to go on to allege Theodoret§ for an abettor of their doctrine, after they had been publicly challenged by a Greek author|| in his tract against Purgatory concerning it; but especially, when his comments on this very place of St. Paul, which themselves have set forth, interpret the fire he there speaks of, to be the fire of hell;¶ and the day which is to reveal it, the day of judgment.

There are yet remaining two of the writers of the Latin Church to be considered by us; the first Tertullian,** in his book *de Anima*, c. 17. So Bellarmine alleges him; but it should have been the 35th. But this author is utterly foreign to his purpose. All he says is, that the souls of men shall be restored to their bodies, some sooner, others later, in

Τοιούτῳ πυρὶ Κλεόπα καὶ Σίμωνος ἐκαίετο ἡ καρδία, ὅτε διήνοιγεν αὐτοῖς ὁ κύριος τὰς γραφάς· Τοιούτῳ Θερμαίνονται πυρὶ οἱ τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες, &c. T. 2. cap. 6. [Ibid.] p. 172. B.

* Vid. *ibid.* p. 216. E.

† Theodor.

‡ Bellarm. [ut supra,] p. 608. C.D.

§ See Bellarm. l. 1. de Purg. c. 5. [Ibid.] p. 591. B.

|| Nilus de Purgatorio, p. 144. [Lugd. Bat. 1595.]

¶ Theodoret in 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13. Τῆς γενένης τὸ πῦρ. T. 3. p. 134. A. and below Lit. B. ἡ γὰρ ἡμέρα δηλώσει ἀντὶ τοῦ, ἡ τῆς κρίσεως. Et Lit. C. ἡμέρα τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ σωτήρος. Edit. Paris GL. 1642.

** Tertul.

Christ's millenary kingdom, according to what their sins or piety have deserved: that if we live wickedly, the Judge shall cast us into the infernal prison,* "from whence we shall not go out, until every the least offence has been paid for by the delay of our rising." And this was all that Rigaltius himself understood by it.

As for St. Austin,† the last Father to be considered by us, I have already said enough to obviate whatever authorities can be brought from him. He was in the opinion of those who believed a probatory fire at the end of the world; and to this many of his expressions refer. Again, he thought that those who departed hence, did not go straight to heaven; and therefore that those whose‡ affections were very much tied to the things of this world, might still retain in their separate state some desires towards them, and be troubled for the loss of them: and by this we must explain some others of his sayings. But in all these, he expresses himself with so much doubt and uncertainty, as plainly shews how little he thought any of these things to be articles of faith; and whatever they were, yet are they, to be sure, all of them vastly different from the Roman purgatory.

And now, after so particular an examination of the several testimonies produced in favour of this doctrine; I think I may venture to conclude with the same that I began this section, that neither the holy Scripture, nor Fathers of the first 600 years, do at all authorize the Romish purgatory. Let us see, finally, whether the reasons offered for the establishment of it will have a sufficient weight to engage us to believe it.

SECT. IV.

That the principles of right Reason do not engage us to the belief of Purgatory.

AND first, thus they argue: "There are some sins in their own nature venial,§ and worthy only of a temporal punishment: but it is possible a man may depart out of this life with

* Et judex te tradat Angelo executionis, et ille te in carcerem mandet infernum, unde non dimittaris nisi modico quoque delicto mora Resurrectionis expenso, p. 291. Edit. Paris, 1675.

† St. Austin.

‡ See his Enchiridion. cap. 67, 68. 69. [Vol. 6. p. 221, 222. Par. 1685.] Et in Quæst. ad. Dulcit. qu. 1. See above, Introduction.

§ Bellarm. de Purg. l. 1. c. 11. [ut supra,] p. 609. C.

such only : therefore it is necessary that he may be purged in another life."

To this rope of sand, rather than argument, I reply, 1st, that the supposition it goes upon, is false. 2ndly, that the conclusion it infers, is inconsequent. For the former of these ; that some sins are less than others, it is confessed ; but that any sins are properly venial, we deny. To be venial is to be worthy of pardon, or not to deserve punishment ; but whatsoever does not deserve punishment, can be no sin, for all sin infers an obligation to punishment ; and therefore to be a sin, and yet be venial, is in proper terms, no better than a flat contradiction. Again, the sins here spoken of, are supposed to be worthy of a temporal punishment, but sins that are worthy of a temporal punishment, are not properly venial ; therefore, either the sins here spoken of, must not deserve even a temporal punishment, or they cannot be said to be properly venial.

But, 2ndly, be the sins, as they desire, venial, how does it from hence follow, that it is necessary that these be punished in another life ? And why is not the blood of Christ, which cleanses the greatest sins, a sufficient purgatory for the least infirmities ? Venial sins, are by themselves confessed to be entirely consistent with the grace of God ; nay, so consistent, as not to destroy, or but even lessen it. Now for a Christian, who has lived so well, as to be still in the grace and favour of God ; that has received an actual pardon of all his other sins, through the merits and satisfaction of Christ, so as to be absolutely certain of a crown of glory for ever ; to think that such a one, I say, shall be punished with torments, inferior in nothing but the duration to those of hell fire itself, for such slips and infirmities as the best of men are encompassed with, and which no man can ever hope perfectly to overcome ; and this, notwithstanding all the promises of mercy and forgiveness, which God has declared to us ; this certainly, is so far from being a dictate of right reason, that it is impossible for any one that has any reason at all, and is not exceedingly carried away with prejudice for his opinion, ever to believe it.

Again, 2ndly, thus they argue : " When sinners are reconciled to God, the whole temporal pain is not always remitted with the sin : * now it may happen, and often does happen,

* Bellarm. *ibid.* p. 610. C.

that in a man's whole life, he does not fully satisfy for that temporal pain; and therefore there must be a purgatory wherein to do it."

I answer; that this too proceeds upon a false supposition, that God when he forgives our sins, does not also forgive the entire obligation to punishment, which, by our sins, we stood engaged to; and which both Scripture and reason contradict.

1st, That God does sometimes afflict those persons whose sins he forgives, whether to prove, or to amend, or to secure them for the future; this it is confessed we read in Scripture; and that this is most reasonable, cannot be denied, upon the account of those excellent ends that are to be served thereby, both to the benefit of the sinner, and to warn others, by his example, not to offend. But where is there any mention of any thing of this kind, either threatened or done in another life? What end is there to be served in this? When men go to purgatory, they are already in the grace of God, or otherwise they could not come thither; they are already forgiven their sins, and secure of their salvation. The punishments therefore of that place, can serve no end, either of improving him that suffers them, or of keeping others, by his example, from offending. Add to this that the justice of God is already entirely satisfied by the merits and sufferings of Christ: so that then these punishments can be inflicted for no other purpose than for the delight God takes in punishing. But to say that God delights in the punishment of any, much more of good men, who are his children, who love him, and whom, therefore, he both loves and intends to glorify to all eternity; this is certainly to advance a notion unworthy of God, and contrary to all those kind and endearing ideas which the holy Scriptures have given us of him, and therefore ought not, without evident proof, which is not so much as pretended to by them, to be admitted.

2ndly, When we say that God forgives sin, we must understand by it, one of these two things, *viz.* that he remits either the stain, or the guilt of it. For by sin there are only these two contracted. As for the stain or pollution of sin, that is not properly forgiven, but is washed away by God's sanctifying grace, upon our repentance and reconciliation to him: and for the guilt, that is nothing else, but that obligation to punishment, which every man by sinning renders himself obnoxious to; so that to remit the guilt, is to remit the obligation to punishment. To say, therefore, that God forgives the guilt

of sin, and yet that our obligation to punishment remains, is in effect to say, that God forgives the guilt, which he does not forgive, which must be a contradiction.

But may not God forgive the guilt, as to the obligation it lays upon us to eternal punishment, and yet retain it as to a temporal one? No doubt he may, and had he declared that he would do so, we must have believed it. But then this would not have been properly to forgive the guilt, but to commute it, to lessen it. And since, neither has he any where declared that this is all he does when he forgives sins: nor does his justice require that he should do no more; but especially seeing wherever God speaks of the remission of sins, he does it without restriction, in the most large, comprehensive terms that can be imagined: we see no cause either to suspect his goodness, or to lessen his mercy by our own arbitrary and ungrounded limitations.

But, 3rdly, there is yet another argument, and it is this: *
 “The opinion that takes away purgatory, is not only false but pernicious; for it makes men lazy in avoiding sinning, and in the doing of good works. Whilst he that believes that there is no purgatory, but that all sins are abolished by death to those that die in faith, saith to himself, to what purpose do I labour in fastings and prayer, in continence and alms-deeds? Why do I defraud my heart of its delights and pleasures, since at my death, my sins, whether few or many, shall all be done away?”

“ ——— Habeat jam ROMA Pudorem;
 Tertius e cœlo cecidit Cato.”

For is not this rare cant? to hear those who have taken away the fears of hell, with a demure countenance exclaim against us as wicked, in throwing off so great an engagement to piety, as, if you will believe it, they esteem purgatory to be? But yet, since the point is brought at last to this issue, let us see the comparison.

1st. We who deny purgatory, thus press the practice of good works upon our auditors. That God, to whom we are engaged by all imaginable ties of love, duty, and gratitude, expressly requires them of us, as the only means to retain his favour. That if we be zealous in his service now, we shall certainly receive an eternal weight of bliss and glory in his

* Bellarm. de Purg. lib. 1. c. 11. [ibid.] p. 613. D.

kingdom. But that if we be careless and negligent of our duty, nothing but everlasting torments shall remain for us. That, let us not deceive ourselves, or flatter our souls with any new ways of getting to heaven; "without holiness no man shall ever see the Lord." Repentance is the only thing that by faith can reconcile us to his favour: and repentance cannot be true, except there be a true love of God, and an utter detestation of sin, and a hearty contrition that we have ever committed it: and a steadfast resolution never to fall any more into it; and this improved in an actual, sincere endeavour, what in us lies, to abound in good works, and fulfil that duty which he requires of us. That without this, it is not any power or authority of the Church, absolving us from our sins; any pardons or indulgences, either before or after our commission of them, that can stand us in any stead, or restore us to God's favour and the hopes of salvation. But that if we do this, then indeed we may assure ourselves of his acceptance; we may raise our hopes to the blessings that he has promised; and that we may be the more encouraged to pursue them, may assure ourselves that all those joys which he has prepared for us, and which it does not now enter into the heart of man even to conceive anything of, as he ought to do, are not at any great distance: as soon as ever we have finished our course here, we shall presently be translated, if not to a perfect fruition of them, yet to such an antepast, as shall be more than a sufficient reward for all our endeavours in the pursuit of them.

This is the method of our preaching: let us now set Cardinal Bellarmine in the pulpit, and see how more effectually he will press these things upon his congregation. And because I would not make the worst of the matter, we will not consider him in quality of a Jesuit, instructing the people by artifice and distinction, how to evacuate the whole morality of the Gospel, by stating precisely the point, how often a man is obliged to love God? Whether upon all Sundays and holidays? or only once a year? or once in five years? or but any one time in a man's whole life? or finally not at all, neither living nor dying? This were, it may be, to carry matters too far; we will stop within the bounds of their more common belief.

And here, first of all, as is most fitting, we must be sure to put them often in mind of the obedience they owe to the Church: of the high opinion they ought always to retain of her, and of that entire submission wherewith they are to yield

themselves to her conduct. That they be sure not to fail to go to mass every Sunday and holiday ; that they eat no flesh on any of the fasts of the Church, unless they are otherwise dispensed with to the contrary ; that once, at least, every year they receive the sacrament, and before they do so, that they fail not to go to confession ; that they make no doubt, but by the priest's absolution, they are certainly forgiven their sins, whatsoever they were ; that indeed, it were well that they were contrite for them ; but if they are not, it is all one, attrition, with the sacrament of penance, does the same thing : that this, therefore, sets them free of all danger of hell, so that be their lives what they will, there is no great fear of that ; but yet, that to secure their piety, the Church has thought fit to discover to them another very terrible place called purgatory, whither they must go to satisfy for their sins, before they can get to heaven. That, indeed, let them live how they will, hither they must come : but yet, let them not be discouraged ; there are several secret ways of avoiding it, with infinitely more security than the best life in the world can give them. First, an indulgence may be had, and that too beforehand, to secure the greatest sinner from ever coming thither. If this fail, yet they may enter themselves into some holy fraternity, as for instance, that of the Scapulary, and then they certainly get out of purgatory the Saturday after they die. At least, that let the worst that can happen, a good number of masses, when they are dead, infallibly does the business. It is true, none of these things can be had without money, and therefore the poor must take heed, and have as few sins as they can to answer for ; but yet, that if they watch their time, an indulgence will come at an easy rate, and the Church in charity will fall her price, rather than refuse that money that will be so much to the benefit of her faithful children.

This is, I think, the difference between us : let the world now judge, who it is that give the greatest encouragement to vice, the Cardinal in these easy methods of salvation, or we, by retaining the old Scripture way of repentance and a good life. But the truth is, the argument ought to have lain thus ; the opinion that takes away purgatory, and leaves men that have lived well in repose at their death, cuts off all the benefit of masses, prayers for the dead, and the like ; not to say anything of the dear concern of indulgences, by which our Church and our clergy, in great measure, subsist ; and therefore, though

we know we have nothing to say for it, yet we are resolved we will not quit the belief of it. And this, indeed, is the honest truth; but for the rest, it is in good earnest, nothing to the purpose.

SECT. V.

That the doctrine of Purgatory is contrary to Scripture, Antiquity and Reason.

HITHERTO we have seen how little grounds the Church of Rome has to establish this doctrine as an article of faith; we will now go yet further, and shew not only, that there is no obligation upon us, either from Scripture, or Antiquity, or Reason, to believe this doctrine; but that according to the principles of every one of these, we ought not to do it.

1st, For Scripture.

It is not a little to be considered, in opposition to this doctrine, that these sacred writings not only every where represent to us this present life as the time of trial and exercise of sufferings and afflictions; but also encourage us on this very consideration, to bear them with patience and resignation, that as soon as we die, they shall all end, and we shall receive the blessed reward which God has prepared for them that bear them as they ought to do. "I look upon it," says St. Paul, Rom. viii. 18, "that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." And again, 2 Cor. iv. 17, "For the sufferings of this present life work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Many other places of this kind there are, in which our present sufferings are compared with, and opposed to, our future reward. Now if, when all these encounters are ended, there be still another, and a more dreadful sort of trial to be undergone elsewhere, how could the Apostle have used those kind of antitheses; and have encouraged us to a constancy in our present afflictions, from the prospect of a time, when, according to these men, there are yet greater and more severe ones to be undergone by us?

And this then may be a second observation; that the Scripture always speaks of the death of good men as a blessing, an immediate rest from their labours; and therefore, sure, understood nothing of those torments to which the Church of Rome now condemns them. So Rev. xiv. 13: "I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead

which die in the Lord from henceforth : yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours." It was this assurance made the holy men of old so desirous of their dissolution, that they might find an end of all those labours and evils which they suffered here. Phil. i. 23 : "I am in a strait," says St. Paul, "betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better," &c. Surely St. Paul never thought of purgatory, when he talked thus of going to Christ ; nor would he have appeared so desirous of his dissolution, had he known he should have been cast into such a fire as the Romanists suppose to be in this infernal region.

Nor can it here be reasonably said, that this was the Apostle's peculiar happiness ; and therefore, that though he indeed was secure of going immediately to Christ, yet others were not therefore to expect the like favour : for 2 Cor. v. 1, we find him promising the very same to all Christians indifferently ; "We know," says he, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And again, ver. 8, "When we are absent from the body," says he, "we are present with the Lord : " by all which it appears, that when good men die, they go to the Lord, to Christ, to their heavenly house ; and that sure is not purgatory.

To this agree these few instances we have of just men's dying, in the New Testament. Lazarus in the parable, was in Abraham's bosom ; the penitent thief on the cross was promised that he should be that day with Christ in paradise : and we have good reason to believe, that the same is the state of all others, not only from the passages already mentioned, and many more of the like kind that might have been offered ; but also from this, that we have not in all the holy Scripture the least intimation of any such place as purgatory : that there is neither precept nor example of any one, that either prayed for the delivery of their friends departed, out of these pains, or any directions left for any one hereafter so to do. Now certainly it is not easy to be imagined, that the holy penmen should have been so perfectly silent in this matter, had there been so great a cause for it, as the delivery of their souls out of purgatory undoubtedly would have been ; or had they then esteemed it so excellent and necessary a piece of Christian charity, as it is now pretended to be.

And this presumption against purgatory, the holy Scriptures will afford us. If we look,

2ndly, To the holy Fathers,

We shall find them proceeding exactly upon the same principles: they thought the just, when they were departed, were presently in a state of happiness; that it was injurious to Christ, to hold, that such as died in his faith, were to be pitied; that Christians therefore ought not by any means to be afraid of dying: * “It is for him,” says St. Cyprian, “to fear death, that is unwilling to go to Christ. It is for him to be unwilling to go to Christ, who doth not believe that he beginneth to reign with Christ.—Simeon said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; proving and witnessing that the servants of God then have peace, then enjoy free and quiet rest, when being drawn from these storms of the world, we arrive at the haven of our everlasting habitation and security.—Let us therefore embrace the day that bringeth every one to his own house, which having taken us away from hence, and loosed us from the snares of this world, returneth us to paradise, and to the kingdom of heaven.”

I shall leave it to any one to consider, whether this holy Father, who discoursed thus of our dying, believed any thing of these tormenting purgatory fires, that now keep men in anxiety, and make the best Christians afraid to die. And the same is the language of all the rest.† St. Chrysostom particularly enforces the same considerations from those Psalms that were usually said at the burial of the dead. “Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath been gracious unto thee. You see,” says that holy Father, “how that death is a blessing, a rest. God calls it a blessing, and dost thou lament? What couldst thou have done more, if thou hadst been his enemy?”

But to put this matter, as to the point of antiquity, beyond all doubt, I will remark distinctly two or three things.

1st, That several of the most ancient Fathers, not only believed the souls of the faithful to be in happiness, immediately upon their departure, but to be carried immediately into

* See his Book de Mortalitat. p. 157. [Oxon. 1682.]

† Hieron. in Os. com. 3. Augustin. Epist. 28. ad Hier. To. 2. p. 31. A. [Lugd. 1664.] Et Tract. 49. in Joan. [Ibid.] To. 9. p. 124. A. Auctor. Quæst. sub Justinii nomin. Quæst. 75. p. 436. D. E. Paris, 1636. Chrysost. Hom. de SS. Bernice et Prosdoce. t. 1. Frontod. p. 563. Paris, G. L. 1636.

heaven.* 1. So Athenagoras, 2. St. Cyprian, 3. Origen, 4. Gregory Nazianzen, 5. Chrysostom, 6. Cyril Alexandrinus,† 7. St. Jerome, and others. Now, certainly they who believed that just men, when they die, go straight to heaven, could not have believed that they were for a long while after their death tormented in purgatory; and therefore all these, at least, must have been of an opinion different from the Church of Rome in this matter.

2ndly, Another thing remarkable in some of the ancient Fathers, is, that they utterly deny that the soul is capable of being purged in another world; and this is, to be sure, expressly contrary to the present doctrine of the Romanists in this point. Thus Gregory Nazianzen, speaking of the judgment after death: "It is better," says he, "to be now chastised and purged, than to be delivered over to that torment, when it shall be no longer a time of purgation, but of punishment." Where we see the Father expressly opposes the time of purgation in this life, to the time not of purgation, but of punishment in the next. And St. Chrysostom, "If the soul be purged here (*i.e.* from sin), that fire shall not hurt it, when it departs hence: but the soul that goes hence in sin, that fire (not of purgatory, but of hell) shall receive." This was the doctrine of those times; the soul that was clear of sin by God's pardon and forgiveness, no fire could hurt; that which was not, no fire could cleanse; but it was to remain in torments of hell for ever.

Nor may we omit to observe, 3rdly, That the Fathers take no notice of purgatory in such places, as had they believed it, they could not well have omitted it. Hence we see no mention of it in any of their Creeds or Councils, or catechetical discourses, in which the other articles of their faith are set down and explained. The fifth General Council, which condemned Origen for his errors, concerning the pains after death, never mentioned any other purgatory in opposition to that which he had heretically invented. But that which shews it yet more plainly to have been unknown to them, is, that not only St. Augustine, but Pope Gregory himself, the great patron of this error, yet spoke of it with some doubt; not as they use to do

* 1. Legat. pro Christianis. 2. Cyprian libr. de mortal. p. 157. vid. supr. 3. Orig. contr. Cels. l. 6, 7. 4. Greg. Naz. Or. 10. To. 1. [ut supra.] p. 173. 5. Chrysost. vid. supr.

† 6. Cyril. Alex. in Joan. 19, 30. lib. 12. to. 4. Ed. G. L. Paris. 1638. p. 1069. B. C. 7. Hier. Epist. 25. fol. 71. C. to. 1. Edit. Erasm.

of a point firmly believed by the Church, but as a peculiar thing, in which they were not themselves very well resolved. When the Fathers disputed against Origen, they none of them mention any of the purgatory pains, which the orthodox faith taught, to distinguish them from those which he erroneously had invented. When Epiphanius disputed against Aetius, concerning the reason and benefit of praying for the dead, is it to be imagined he could then have forgot the great concern of delivering the souls departed out of purgatory, had the Church then believed any such thing? To all which, if we finally add, that the Greek Church neither at this day does, nor ever did receive this doctrine, I cannot tell what clearer evidence we can desire to shew, that this whole business of purgatory is but an error of the Latin Church, not an article of the catholic faith.

3rdly, For Reason.

I shall only offer this one reflection : whether there can be any reason to think there should be such a place, and such punishments as purgatory, for no end or purpose in the world. They who go thither must be perfect in charity, in the grace of God, secure of their salvation ; their satisfaction must have been made by Christ's blood, and so God's justice satisfied. Now when all this is already done, to what end is it that they should be tormented ? Had there been any means by such a purgatory, either to fit them for heaven, or to satisfy the Divine justice, there might then have been some pretence for it. But to think that God punishes men only for punishing-sake ; and this too his own servants, men who are in his favour, that have lived well, and upon that account are justified by him through the blood of Christ ; this is such an idea of an infinite love, mercy and goodness, as sure can never be the dictate of right reason ; I think I may say, is utterly inconsistent with it.

THE TEXTS EXAMINED, WHICH PAPISTS CITE OUT OF
THE BIBLE, FOR THE PROOF OF THEIR DOCTRINE CON-
CERNING PURGATORY.

PART I.

THE Council of Trent shews her artifice and subtlety in no one point defined by her, more than in her definition concerning Purgatory, which, though she propounds for an article of faith (and that a most important one), yet her wisdom has thought fit to give no description of it, but leaves it to her prelates and priests to tell what it is, and in what extent to be believed.

Again, though she prefaces her canon with a pretence of a purgatory established in the Catholic Church, according to the doctrines of Scripture, and the traditions of primitive Fathers, yet when she comes to give her own injunctions about it, she is pleased to pass by the Scriptures, and oblige her bishops to be careful to have it preached too, and believed by all the faithful, not as founded in Scripture, but as it has been delivered by holy Fathers and Councils.* It seems (whatever the later defenders of it may have found out) that the Holy Ghost which directed her, assured her of a much better security from tradition than foundation in the Scriptures. But was not this infallible Council all this while much more cautious of her own honour and ease, than careful of the souls of her proselytes, whose faith she thus exposes to the uncertainty of man's representation? What if any priest should trump up Origen's old purgatory? he may produce a much fairer pretence for it from antiquity, than can be produced in vindication of the present Roman purgatory: and let him but make it appear to be as beneficial to the churchmen, and there can be no doubt but it shall be allowed to be as necessary to be believed by the Church.

Amongst the ancient writers, we meet with many strange and unaccountable fancies this way, and there seems to have been

* Decret. de Purgat. in initio. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 894. Lut. Par. 1672.]

a general notion amongst them of a purging fire : but then this was as different from the present Papistical purgatory, as the present time is from the time to come, or as that which is to purge some only, from that which is to purge and purify all men : for theirs was a fire which was supposed to burn out at the day of judgment, and through which, not only venial sins, and such as are defective in some parts of satisfaction, but also the purest saints, prophets, apostles, martyrs, nay, the holy Virgin herself, were imagined to endure and pass through : and this purgatory is abundantly proved out of the Fathers by Bellarmine himself.* So that if the opinion of holy Fathers must guide their faith ; or if they are to believe now, as the Fathers believed in this particular, they must have not only a very implicit, but according to Bellarmine himself,† a very groundless and erroneous faith : since he explodes these imaginations of the Fathers for such. But to come more close to the business in hand ; though the Trent doctors were so nice and tender in their canons, yet we find them more courageous in their Catechism,‡ where, amongst the articles of their Creed, they not only number purgatory, but also define or describe to us what it is, *viz.* a purgatory fire, by which the souls of the faithful, after some determinate torments, are purged ; or, as the word *expiare* more properly imports, in which they make satisfaction and amends to God's justice for the failures which they had not time to repair in this life ; and so become qualified to enter those everlasting mansions, into which nothing that is defiled shall enter. And no doubt it must be upon this authority that Bellarmine§ so confidently maintains the punishment of purgatory to be the punishment of fire, since the Council of Trent no ways defines it to be a fire in her decree about it. As to the place of this purgatory, whether it be in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, we as yet hear not one word ; but for this, they are to rely upon their confessors, and how they will be able to resolve what the Church representative presumed not to meddle with, I leave them to judge, that can take a view of those irreconcilable imaginations some of the later of the Fathers and Schoolmen had, concerning this particular. For my part, I

* Bell. de Purg. lib. 2. cap. 1. [vol. 2. p. 357, 358. Prag. 1721.]

† Bell. *ibid.*

‡ Catech. ad Paroch. de quinto Symb. Art. p. 52. [Colon. 1684.]

§ Bell. de Purg. lib. 2. cap. 10. Parag. certum est quarto. [Ibid. p. 371. col. 1.]

cannot but wonderfully mistrust the inspiration, which is pretended to have directed these holy Fathers to believe, and propose to be believed, on pain of damnation, a place, of which they dared not to give any manner of account at all: since there is scarce any one text, either in the Old or New Testament, where we meet the word *fire*, but what with some fetch or other their arguers apply to, and interpret of their purgatory; must it not follow, that this Council really mistrusted the explications of their own expositors, that it was satisfied purgatory was not intended in, or asserted by those places, since, notwithstanding all of them, she hath avoided defining it to be a fire? Perhaps, indeed, such a particular assignment of place as we meet defended by the Cardinal and others, was not so fit for an infallible synod to assert; yet since she pretends that her faith hereof is grounded on the Scriptures, methinks it might well become her infallibility to have asserted as much as is, according to their own principles, to be derived from Scripture; and if that be any thing at all, it must be both that it is a fire, as Bellarmine* infers from 1 Cor. iii. 15, “—shall be saved so as by fire,” and also that it is a place under the earth; since almost all of them reason for it, from these words,† “—to whom every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth:” concluding those under the earth can be none but the souls in purgatory; for at last, if it be no subterraneous prison, what impudence must it be thus to abuse and misapply this Scripture? So that without misrepresentation, I hope, we may aver, that the Popish article in this point, is this, that there is a subterraneous place, where, after this life, the souls of the faithful do abide for some time, till chastised with the torments of its fire, they have paid satisfaction for such sins as they had not satisfied for in this world, and which satisfaction may be hastened by the prayers of the living; since the one is the plain doctrine of their Catechism, and the other a necessary inference from those arguments from Scripture, wherewith they themselves defend their purgatory. And therefore we may observe, that the bare doctrine of a third place (though that is as inconsistent with the Scriptures), with which the author of Popery Represented and Misrepresented, would shuffle off this article of purgatory, will not suit with the doctrine and article of the Church of Rome; unless it be a place of fiery torments, where he that has obtained full pardon

* Bell. quo supra.

† Phil. ii. 10.

for all his sins, may further satisfy and atone ; and out of which he may be prayed, by the intercessions of the living. Now then, we of the Reformed Church of England, not only particularly disown such a purgatory, but also absolutely deny that there is any such state at all for satisfactions by torments after this life. We acknowledge but two states, the one of the faithful in heaven, the other for the unrighteous and impenitent in hell ; and this we maintain ; first, because the Scriptures speak of no more but these two ; besides, since the Church of Christ has never been represented under other titles than these two, Militant and Triumphant : they do necessarily exclude this third subterraneous Church, which is neither militant, because ascertained of salvation, and freed from the conflicts and oppositions of this world ; nor triumphant, because scorched and afflicted with the most exquisite pains and torments. Secondly, We reject their purgatory, because it is no other than a dream, and delusion of man's fancy and contrivance, without the least colour or countenance of the holy Scriptures to support it ; much more, without plain and clear Scripture to recommend and enforce it for an article of faith : and this is what we undertake to make good at present. Nor can we more happily discharge this performance, than by a close encounter with our adversaries, and by laying open the dark obscurities they depend on, and discovering with what weak and impertinent misapplications they abuse the Scriptures, fondly ensnaring their own souls, and other men's.

The author I shall the more purposely examine, shall be the Catholic Scripturist, who, as he is the latest, so we may expect to find him the most profound and prepared ; amongst forty Popish points boasted to be made apparent in Scripture, we may certainly expect to have this of purgatory, which is of such incomparable use and accomplishment for the Church's grandeur, most irrefutably displayed and laid open. Now then, the method he observes in proving it from Scripture, is this, first, from principles of Scripture, necessarily inferring such a purgatory ; secondly, from several express texts which prove a purgatory.

We shall therefore, follow him in the same method :

First, discover the impertinence of his pretended principles.

Secondly, shew the insufficiency of the texts alleged, and that, with this advantage given him, that where we find his judgment and knowledge in the Scriptures failing (which I assure you, labours under many great infirmities), we will help

him with the texts urged and insisted on by those of better judgment and knowledge of his own party.

The first principle he pretends from Scripture, is this,* that there are Scriptures which teach that after the sin itself is forgiven, there do remain some pains still due, even to that sin, and therefore consequently infer a purgatory, because that man to whom the sin is forgiven, may die before he has paid those pains in this life.

But may not that man who has read those passages of the Prophet,† “He has borne our griefs, he has carried our sorrows; he was bruised for our iniquities, and wounded for our transgressions:” and again, “the chastisement of our peace was upon him:” wonder what Scripture there can possibly be, which teaches us that there are pains and sorrows due for sin, not comprehended within Christ’s sufferings, but such, which even after his full pardon and remission granted to us, must actually be borne and satisfied for in our own persons! Why this he attempts to make out by these two instances.

First, That original sin,‡ though it is effectually washed away in baptism, yet the infant baptized, is still obnoxious to death, after such remission, which is the punishment due to that sin.

Secondly, From what we meet with in the 14th chapter of Numbers, where God tells the people, that though he had forgiven them their sins according to his word, yet that they should not see the promised land; ver. 32, but their carcases should fall in the wilderness; ver. 33, their children should wander in the wilderness for forty years, and should bear their fornication, until the carcases of their fathers should be consumed in the desert.

Now the answer to both these instances, is clear and obvious: for, first, they speak only of such punishments, as God, for their transgressions, inflicted on the living in this world, and therefore to infer hence a punishment necessarily to be inflicted on the dead, must be irrational. For, secondly, God may, no doubt, inflict a temporal punishment, as he did on David; either as a condition of his remission, or as an outward admonition and mark of our iniquities for all generations, whereby to deter and affright them from the like misdoings, and yet this no ways argues a satisfaction inherent in such a temporal punishment; or, that when he pardons us

* Cath. Script. 25. Points of Purgatory.

† Isa. liii.

‡ Cath. Script. 25. Points of Purgatory.

without any such temporal afflictions annexed, some punishment must still necessarily be due by way of a satisfaction for our sins, which must unavoidably be paid, either here, or hereafter. What! because God hath entailed death upon all for a testimony, and outward remembrance of our parents' disobedience in this life, therefore there must be a purgatory for satisfactions hereafter. Is death a satisfaction for our original sin? Then how comes it washed away by baptism before death? Or again, because, according to the degeneracy of man's nature, such an innocent baptized infant may die, is it more rational to say with this Scripturist, it died for a satisfaction due to our original guilt, which remains after our remission by baptism, or to say it died according to the disposition and appointment of God, who has made death a continual memorandum of that original guilt? The Scriptures indeed tell us, that "death came through sin, and hath so passed upon all;" but they tell us withal, that for a good Christian, such as we may believe a baptized infant to be, "to die is gain:" to be sure they say no such thing as this Scripturist would teach us, to wit, that for some sins forgiven, and remitted to us through Christ's blood, there remain some after pains, for a personal satisfaction payable by us in another state. Death, no doubt, is the consequence of that corruption which our parents have derived on us through their disobedience; but by no means a satisfactory punishment for their transgressions. And therefore, secondly, though God in the same breath, tells his people they shall bear their fornication in the wilderness forty years, in which he told them he had forgiven them their sins, yet this proves not that it was upon the account of any remaining satisfaction that God afflicted them forty years, as the Catholic Scripturist infers (for let him answer me, how a punishment of forty years, could be a just satisfaction to the offended justice of God, against whom they had then sinned most mortally), but that in this life, God would have them subdued, humbled, and kept in forty years straits and severities for a curb and bridle to their posterities, though in the mean time, those who died in the wilderness with this promise of forgiveness, no doubt slept with their fathers, even in the bosom of Abraham; and thus their own expositors will teach them, that these tribulations and punishments, wherewith God sometimes afflicts us in this world, are to keep us humble, and dependent upon his goodness, to remember us continually of our miscarriages and

iniquities, and so increase our repentance and submission ; but no satisfactions or recomences to complete the ultimate discharge of our debts to his justice. And therefore, certainly, it must be the greatest wonder in the world, to hear a man that pretends to be a father of the children of Christ, and one of the priests of the Lamb, conclude with this Catholic Scripturist, that because God threatened the fathers to punish their posterity so severely in this life, because these were the terms and particulars upon which he had remitted their iniquity, therefore it must be reasonable to infer the fathers themselves, who obtained a promise of remission before death, should for a time, nay, forty years, says our Scripturist, be tormented with purgatory,* or that they could not be forgiven without undergoing the pains of a middle state. For all that I see, he may as well conclude transubstantiation, or the worship of images, from this place and instance, as any the least pretence of a purgatory. And therefore it will not be worth the while to follow him through the rest of his instances, since they all tend to the same end, and shew only that there was a present punishment accompanying an eternal remission, which was purely in the justice of God to inflict or abate according to his free mercy, it relating only to this life ; but tell us nothing, that such punishments were so due to the Divine justice in another world, if not undergone in this, that it could not be satisfied without them ; this certainly must reflect on the all-sufficient sacrifice of our Redeemer, whose blood is the propitiation for our sins ; and therefore as his principle is without Gospel or divinity, so must the purgatory founded thereon be without Scripture or divine relation.

His second principle from Scripture is this :† “ The Scriptures teach that there are venial sins, *i.e.* such sins as are light and trivial, which, though they deserve some temporal mulct, yet no eternal torments, and therefore he that dies impenitent in them, cannot go to heaven, because nothing that is in the least defiled can enter therein ; nor to hell, because he deserves not those everlasting burnings ; therefore a third state there must be, even purgatory, where he may, in some sense, be purged, and through his own satisfaction in enduring its torments, prepare and qualify himself for heaven.” What incomparable reasoning is here ! which sets a man above the satisfaction of Christ’s merits, his sins being too small to need

* Cath. Script. p. 233.

† Cath. Script. p. 337.

his expiation, which finds remission for a man dying in impenitence, that contradicts the whole current of the Gospel, which teaches us, that without repentance there can be no remission ; and again, to fix a purgatory, calls in question the justice and equity of God himself, who hath pronounced by his Holy Spirit, that he that shall offend in the least of his commands, shall in nowise be his disciple, and then certainly, by no means enter into his glory.

As to the instances alleged by him of the midwives preserving the Hebrew children,* and Rahab's denying, and hiding away the messengers, what grounds they went upon in their answers, appear not to us ; whether God who is the Disposer of all things, by his Holy Spirit, immediately inspired and directed them or no, is not mentioned ; but for their incurring such venial sins as he speaks of, there is not the least pretence nor circumstance to infer it ; the text says, they "feared God in that action," *Exod. i. 15*, and that because they did so, "he provided for them and built them houses." And of Rahab it is recorded, that she was "justified by works, receiving the messengers, and putting them forth another way, after she had first hid them," *James ii. 25*. By which we may conclude, they sinned not at all in so doing : but how it proves them guilty of a venial transgression, when God himself applauded their performance, I profess I cannot apprehend. I shall make bold to aver, that had there been any unjust equivocation, or sinful falsification, God would never have approved, much less by his Holy Spirit commended and rewarded them. These, indeed, are two of those transactions which we are to believe well done, because God himself has vouched them to be such ; but we can take no measures from such dark proceedings which remain so unaccountable ; and now, how even venial sins could be thus meritorious, as to obtain God's express favour, particular approbation, nay, rewards, will take up our Scripturist another labour to make out. In the meantime, let us go on and see with what profound stupidity he toys and trifles with the most terrible denunciations of Christ himself : *Matth. v. 22*, "Whosoever is angry," says our Saviour, "with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment ; and whosoever shall say unto his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council ; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Here our Scripturist is very pompous and triumphant, and from the

* *Cath. Script. p. 337.*

pretence of three kinds of punishments, very confidently proclaims three kinds of sins, amongst which, venial are one, which he will have to merit only a temporal punishment, whereas now our Saviour is most serious here in representing the terrors and punishments, threatening all the works and fruits of our unlawful anger, even in the other world: but what wonder to see so blundering a Jesuit thus ridiculously insulting with such straws, when the great Cardinal himself lays hold on such inconsistent conclusions to establish his purgatory?*

One would think nothing could possibly be more plain than our Saviour's intention in this place, which was to shew, that though the law of man only censured and condemned the murderer, yet the Divine justice revealed in Christ, will pursue every disorderly passion, every undue motion and operation of anger, even in a capital manner in the world to come; to which purpose, as murder was accountable to the judgment, which had the cognizance of capital matters; so says our Saviour, "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause," that is, is guilty but in the least degree, "shall be in danger of the judgment; whosoever shall say Raca, shall be in danger of the council," which inflicts a yet severer punishment, *viz.* that of stoning; "but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire," that is, the highest and most afflicting of all punishments. Now what can be more plain, than that, as murder is the highest and most grievous of all the effects of passion and unjust wrath, and that which gave occasion to this discourse of our Saviour; so these three are represented by him as several degrees and approaches towards that dreadful sin, not different kinds of sins, as the Cardinal, without the least occasion infers, but different degrees of the same sin, and so consequently, the penalties annexed to them not different kinds, but several degrees of the same punishment, *viz.* all equally eternal, though not all equally afflicting and tormenting. Bellarmine acknowledges that the punishments insinuated here, are such as shall be inflicted in the next world, but by an inexplicable fetch, would have part temporal, *viz.* those threatened to the first two degrees punishable by the judgment and council, and part eternal: but he produces no reason for his conjecture, nor, indeed, does any appear, unless it be these words *hell fire*, which though I confess they may be taken literally, yet our Saviour seems to use them here in a metaphorical way, with

* Bell. de Purg. lib. 1. cap. 8. [p. 340. col. 2. Prag. 1721.]

respect to the terrors of Hinnom,* which the Jews even then had in memory, and by which it is probable, he took occasion to express the exquisiteness of the punishment due to the highest degree, since they had no such punishment among them, as burning in a light fire : but since our Saviour here declares every degree to be capital, why must not every degree be liable to an eternal punishment ? Did ever any man reckon venial offences amongst capital punishments ? I will here refer our Scripturist to one of his own fraternity ; Maldonat,† in his comment upon this chapter : “ As for the council,” says he, “ that also comprehends capital punishments, nay, such by which eternal death is signified.” I would fain know what temporal punishments are to be expected at the judgment-seat of God ; but that it is there, where this sentence will be given, Theophylact‡ apparently informs us, explaining the case of the sinner in the second degree, who is in danger of the council : “ In danger of the council (says he) of the holy Apostles, when they sit judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” I doubt that punishment will be of an eternal duration, which they inflict. And therefore, because I would refer them to the authorities most allowable in their own opinions, which may undeceive them in so weighty a concern as the wrong meaning of the Scriptures, I must send them again to the same Maldonat, with another most applauded champion of their own fraternity, and that is Suarez,§ who plainly denies this text to relate to purgatory, and that for this reason, because it is mighty probable those three particulars (judgment, council, and hell fire) intimate an eternal damnation, which is greater or lesser, according to the quality of the offence. And then for the Cardinal’s three kinds of sins and punishments, hear the resolution of Maldonat,|| in the place before cited : “ It is

* See Grotius upon the place. [vol. 2. p. 45. col. 1. Lond. 1679.]

† Mald. in loc. deinde per Concilium Capitalem pœnam intelligit, per quam æternam mortem significat.

‡ Theophylact. in locum : *ἐνοχος ἔσται τῷ συνεδρίῳ τῶν ἁγίων* Ἀποστόλων, ὅτε καθίσουσι κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλάς. [vol. 4. p. 27. Venet. 1754.]

§ Suarez. Tom. 4. in Thom. Disput. 45. §. 1. num. 13. p. 557. Hic locus non spectat ad hanc Controversiam de Purgatorio, quia valde probabile est omnia illa membra (Judicii, Concilii, Gehennæ) significare æternam damnationem, et pœnam majorem, vel minorem, pro qualitate delictorum.

|| Mald. in Mat. v. Certum est hoc in loco pœnarum et peccatorum gradus, non genera distingui, quæ tria peccata Christus eadem inferni pœna, licet non eadem gravitate, digna esse docuit.

certain," says he, "that not the kinds, but the degrees of sins are distinguished in this place, which three degrees, Christ has here pronounced, deserving the same infernal punishment, though not the same weight and severity of it."

I shall only admonish such Scripturists as these of these two things, and so leave them to a more impartial reflection on their own cause. 1. That it is very requisite they should agree amongst themselves about this text of Scripture, before they lay such stress and weight upon it in so important a point as an article of their faith. 2. That they would remember that they are not only Protestants, but those of their own order, which thus testify against them, how shamefully these have abused and distorted this plain Scripture.

And thus we come to his convincing words, his few and many stripes, his motes and beams, his gnats and camels, which are the remaining support of his venial reasonings; to all which, I shall first give this general answer, and let our Scripturist make the best of it: that if those offences expressed in these terms, and which, for the manner of the expressing them, he concludes to be but venial, are sins indeed, then they must be a transgression of the law of God, for without law, there can be no sin. Secondly, If they are committed against any part of the law of God, then they must be equally obnoxious to the infinite wrath and judgment of God, with other sins, which are expressed in the most heinous manner. For, since the holy Apostle tells us, "Whosoever shall offend in any one (though the most minute particular of the law) is guilty of all:" must it not necessarily follow, that such a minute transgressor must also be equally liable to the punishments due to the whole law? And then those can never be made appear by Scripture to be more than eternal; for though God, indeed, does not threaten an equal degree of sufferings, yet the wages of all sin is revealed to be death, and that too death eternal; and we hear of no other punishment for sinners, of what kind soever in the New Testament, but a "fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation;" but without timely repentance, a final exclusion from the kingdom of heaven. Our Scripturist,* indeed, insinuates, that God and Christ must be tyrants, and cruel, in his opinion, should they reward our lighter miscarriages with eternal pains; but God's justice has left no comfortable expectation for any impenitent sinner whatsoever, dying unrepentant, though but in the least

* Cath. Script. p. 337.

of sins ; nor indeed do we find anything offered by the Catholic Scripturist himself, to evince the contrary. To pass by his motes and beams, which our Saviour calls so, only in comparison with the more heinous enormities of the Pharisees ; can any thing be more venial, than a few idle words ? and yet, if the Scripture the Catholic produces may be relied upon, I dare aver, all pretence of purgatory for venial satisfactions is altogether ridiculous : “ For I say unto you,”* says our Saviour, “ that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment :” what can be the meaning of this text, if not this, that every idle word not here repented of, shall be accounted for at the day of judgment ? And then where is your purgatory satisfaction.

He flutters next with his many and few stripes, making the many signify eternal punishment, but the few no more than two or three strokes of a discipline, or such a short risk in purgatory, as may easily be bought off with a small present to his confessor at the last gasp : but can any one be more fit for many stripes than this Jesuit, that blushes not to fool and trifle thus with the word of God ? Do not Theophylact, and all divines (but those that understand no divinity) understand these stripes, as the same in kind, but different in their number and portion ? Does not our Saviour plainly shew how he will require from us all according to those gifts and capacities he has endowed us with, that whosoever offends or neglects obedience to his will, must expect the very same revenges of his justice, though not in the same degree ? Is here any thing to incite us to sin against God, or neglect the opportunities of amendment in this life, upon the confidence of salvation, through our enduring a few momentary strokes in another state ? Cannot the stripes be few and many, but they must needs be temporal and eternal ? Did ever any divine before this Scripturist† suggest, if all were eternal, then they must all be equally many and numerous ? What says Theophylact upon the place :‡ “ Let us be afraid, my brethren ; for if he who knoweth nothing is worthy of stripes, what shall become of us, who knowingly offend ?” This was his address to the doctors of the Church, and may admonish our Scripturist, that even an ignorant transgression of the law exposes us to the stripes due

* Matth. xii. 36.

† Cath. Script. p. 242.

§ Theoph. in locum. Φρίξωμεν ἀδελφοί εἰ γὰρ ὁ μηδὲ ὕλως γινούς, ἄξιός πληγῶν, ποῖός ἀπαλλάξει λόγος τοὺς ἐν γνώσει πλημμελοῦντας, καὶ μάλιστα εἰ καὶ διδάσκαλοι εἴεν.

to the law, yea, even to the same in quality, though not in number, as is payable to the most knowing offender : and therefore, though this Catholic Scripturist's understanding in the Scriptures cannot much endanger him, though he be in the rank of doctors, yet he has great reason to beware, lest his affected ignorance do not expose both himself and followers to the greatest stripes. For my part, I see no other way for him to escape, but by his honest recanting such wretched distortions and violations of the Scriptures, and so confessing, that, as the Scriptures enforce no such principle as sins venial, so neither do they establish any such place as purgatory for their expiation.

And thus I come to his third principle from Scripture, which is this ; the Scriptures teach us to pray for the dead, therefore they teach us there is a purgatory. Now this is as concluding in the consequence, as it is false in the premises. We deny not, but that prayer for the dead is of great date and antiquity, but we are sure purgatory is nevertheless a novelty for that ; the grounds the ancients went upon in their prayers for those deceased, being altogether inconsistent with the present circumstances of the Popish purgatory. Every body knows what different conceptions they had of the state of the dead, some fancying, that though they slept in peace, yet they were detained in various receptacles, out of which, at the last day, they should be removed, some sooner, some later, according to the guilt and number of their sins. Others conceived, that though they enjoyed a present ease, yet there would a purging fire flame out at the last day, which should try and purify, and through which, both bad and good, were all to pass. Now those who were led with such imaginations as these, I hope, might offer up their prayers for the happy resurrection, speedy acquittal at the day of judgment, and perfect consummation of the blessedness of them who were fallen asleep in the sleep of death, without the least apprehension of a purgatory, where even those which die in the Lord are in continual broilings and torments. It is one thing surely to beseech God to be merciful in his last judgment, and another thing to entreat him to grant a relaxation and deliverance out of present torments ; nay, nothing is more apparent than that the ancients, when they prayed for those departed out of this life, thought of nothing less than a purgatory ; for if we look into their Liturgies, do we not find their public offices for the dead framed in this

manner; nay, in these very words, “*Offerimus tibi rationalem hunc cultum, pro in fide requiescentibus, majoribus, Apostolis, præcipue vero pro sanctissima Maria Deipara, &c.**” We offer unto thee, O Lord, this our reasonable sacrifice for them that rest in faith, our fathers, patriarchs, prophets and apostles, but more especially the most holy Virgin.” And therefore certainly here is no appearance of the notion of a purgatory, which not only depriveth of present rest, but abounds with such torments, as neither prophets nor apostles, much less the holy Virgin, could, according to their own acknowledgments, be exposed to. And indeed, whoever takes a view of that short chapter in Epiphanius,† where he justifies the Church in this particular against Aërius, must conclude that prayers for the dead, and purgatory, are no such reciprocal principles, but that the one may be made without the least supposition of the other.‡ His first and main reason for them is this, that they which are present at the prayers, may hereby become assured that the dead are not reduced to a non-existence, but still alive, and in being with God himself: which is inconsistent with their notion of purgatory, which is this, that the souls of the departed are therein detained from God’s blessed presence. 2. He not only shews it done to distinguish the faithful servants of Christ from other men, but also Christ himself, who is not to be prayed for, from the best of saints. And when he reckons up the differences between Christ and those they prayed for then,§ he describes them thus: He is God, the other, men; he is in heaven, the other in the earth, by reason of their bodily remains detained there; he says not, by reason of their souls detained in a subterraneous prison, as no doubt he would have suggested, had that Church prayed for their dead with those religious apprehensions of a purgatory, which the present defenders of it now do. 3. He tells us, that prayers offered for the dead, are indeed profitable for them, though they take not away all their sins.¶ Which shews, that in his time they hoped by them, in some measure,

* Basil. et Chrysost. in Liturg.

† Epiph. Hæres. 75. cap. 7. [vol. 1. p. 911. Colon. 1682.]

‡ Epiph. quo supra τί τούτου καιρίωτερον, πιστεύειν μὲν τοὺς παρόντας, ὅτι οἱ ἀπελθόντες ζῶσι, καὶ ἐν ἀνυπαρξίᾳ οὐκ εἰσιν, ἀλλὰ εἰσὶ, καὶ ζῶσι παρὰ τῷ δεσπότῃ.

§ Epiph. ibid. καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐν οὐρανῷ, ὃς δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, διὰ τὰ ἐπιγῆς λείψανα.

¶ Epiph. ibid. ὠφελεῖ δὲ καὶ ἡ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν γινομένη εὐχή, εἰ καὶ τὰ ὅλα τῶν αἰτιαμάτων μὴ ἀποκόπτει.

to remit, and take away the sins of those for whom they prayed, and so consequently that the prayers then made in the Church had no resemblance at all to such as now suppose a purgatory, because these neither respect nor entreat for the remission of sins or guilt, which is all obtained and perfected in this life, before their coming thither ; and therefore, though Epiphanius tells us they prayed for the wicked, that God would extend his mercy to them, yet it was the mercy of remitting their sins, not delivering them out of some punishments they endured for a time, for want of a full satisfaction. And since the just, such as patriarchs and apostles, were alike mentioned with the wicked,* nothing can be more plain, than that they prayed for the dead without the least apprehension of a purgatory, and so consequently that prayer for the dead does not necessarily infer a purgatory. As for his reasoning, why should they pray either for the souls in heaven, or those in hell? it is nothing to the purpose, since some of them prayed for the hastening and perfecting their bliss at the day of judgment ; others, with an opinion, that even the souls in hell might perceive some relief and mitigation by their prayers, which opinion St. Augustine professes he will not strive against,† so long as the wrath of God is acknowledged to remain eternally upon them. And therefore I shall say no more, but proceed to examine what Scriptures they are which teach, and recommend to us, prayer for the dead.

Now, for this purpose, he has pitched upon two places ; the first of which is this:‡ “What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” A very dark text, to clear a very obscure doctrine. “Why are they baptized for the dead?” As if he had said, says our Scripturist, To what end do men do penance for the dead, if the dead rise not? Why, to a very good end, may the Jesuit reply, viz. to restore them from the pains of purgatory ; and so the Apostle be never the nearer proving the resurrection at the last day, from this baptism. Again, may we not here demand, why must, “be baptized for the dead,” be interpreted, doing penance, offering prayers, sacrifices, and afflicting a man’s self for the dead ; since the Catholic Scripturist brings not one authority for it, and Bellarmine§ renounces the expositions of the most celebrated amongst

* Ibid. ὑπὲρ μὲν ἁμαρτωλῶν δεόμενοι, ὑπὲρ δὲ δικαίων καὶ πατέρων, προφητῶν, &c. † Enchirid. ad Laurent. cap. 112. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 29.

§ Bell. de Purg. lib. 1. cap. 6. [vol. 2. p. 336. Prag. 1721.]

the Fathers, *viz.* Tertullian, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Theophylact, besides their own angelical Thomas, to assert it? Indeed, our Saviour expresses his own passion in such words as these, “I have a baptism to be baptized with,” Luke xii. 50. And so martyrdom by the ancient Church, was called “the baptism of blood;” but what is all this to prayers and sacrifices; or, indeed, to a man’s personal afflicting himself? Let *Baptizari pro mortuis* signify *affligi*, to be afflicted, in the passive, yet still how shall it imply *affligere*, or to afflict one’s self, in the active? Is it the same thing to suffer afflictions from others, and to afflict ourselves for others? Let them shew wherever *baptism*, or *to be baptized*, is used in this sense through the whole Scriptures: why, that Bellarmine can do, because the punishment of purgatory in the Scriptures, is called baptism, as Matth. iii. “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” But then this is only said, and not proved, and therefore why may not we reply, that that speech of the holy Baptist, “he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,” denotes no more but such a baptism which Christ fulfilled on earth; and the word *fire*, is only expressive of the efficacy and great powerfulness of its operation. Chrysostom* explains it thus; and Theophylact† after him, tells us expressly when it was that our Lord baptized with this baptism: “What is the meaning of this,” says he, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire? Why, the meaning is very clear; for he sent his Holy Spirit unto his Apostles, and the fiery cloven tongues appeared and rested upon them.” And, indeed, nothing can be more clear, than that St. John here foretold our Saviour to be the Giver of the Holy Ghost: and that he would manifest his extraordinary divine virtue in a visible miracle, when he thus poured forth his Spirit in the shape of fiery tongues upon his Apostles. Here is no forced or metaphorical strain; nothing but what many of the Cardinal’s own fraternity accord to. Thus Maldonat‡ upon the place tells us, “Some indeed

* Chrysostom. in locum. [vol. 7. p. 154. Par. 1727.]

† Theoph. in Lucæ tertium caput, versum 16. Τί δὲ ταῦτα δηλοῦσι; Τὸ μὲν Βαπτίζει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι καὶ πυρὶ, πρόδηλον πάντως, καὶ γὰρ τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις ἐπέμφε τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ πυρινὰ γλῶσσαι ὤφθησαν μεριζόμεναι αὐτοῖς. [ut supra, vol. 1. p. 295.]

‡ Mald. in Mat. iii. Sunt qui per ignem, hoc loco Purgatorium interpretentur; sed dubium non est, quin per ignem, Spiritus Sanctus significetur; Conjunctio etenim (et) non est copulativa, sed explicativa. Quæ

interpret this place of purgatory ; but there can be no doubt, but by *fire* in this place, is meant the Holy Ghost, for the conjunction (*et*) is not here to be taken as copulative, but explicative ; and this explication is added, to shew that every ordinary communication of God's Spirit is not signified herein ; but that most illustrious descent of it, in a fiery appearance in the day of Pentecost. And that the word *fire*, is only demonstrative of the manner and fulness of that communication of God's blessed Spirit, may appear from St. Mark and St. John, both which express it only by *Spiritu Sancto*, Holy Ghost." Nor is Maldonat alone in his interpretation, for another of them also, Ribera,* in his comment upon Joel, applies this of the second of the Acts, and thus explains it ; "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. They were so far baptized with the Holy Ghost (says he) that the whole house was filled therewith ; and hence (says he) we understand that of St. Matthew, He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." I confess, indeed, the Fathers sometimes apply the word *fire* to another meaning ; but then, not with respect to purgatory, but the fire of Gehenna ; and notwithstanding the Cardinal quotes Basil for the other, yet, besides a man's own reading, Tolet† tells us, that Basil, Hilary, and Damascene, all interpret it of hell fire.

And as we have thus refuted the Cardinal's proof, so shall we easily disappoint him in the text itself ; for why such strains here, metaphors and fetches ? *Baptizari pro mortuis*, i.e. to do penance, sacrifice, pray and groan for dead men. Salmeron‡ tells us, the reason why some make use of this metaphorical interpretation, is, because if the words should be taken properly here, there could be no solid argument whence for the Apostle to conclude a resurrection, and we know the only reason for such interpretations, is, the absurdity and impossibility of the literal sense. But is here really any thing of all this in the case ? Suppose some men, out of concern for those

explicatio est addita, ut non qualiscunque Spiritus Sancti communicatio, sed illa illustrissima, die Pentecostes specie ignis quæ facta est, significaretur.

* Ribera. Com. in Joel 2. Numb. 54. et 55. In tantum Spiritu Sancto baptizati sunt, ut repleretur tota domus in qua erant sedentes. Hinc intelligimus illud, Matth. 3. Ipse baptis. &c.

† Tol. in Luc. cap. 3. Sic ignem interpretatur Basilius, Hilarius, et Damascenus.

‡ Salmeron Com. in. 1 Cor. cap. 15. disput. 24. Quoniam proprie.

who died without baptism, in a mistaken zeal, would be baptized for them, in hopes the dead might perceive the benefit of their vicariate baptism at the resurrection; would not such a custom as this be a good argument against such men, that there is a resurrection? Again, suppose there was such a custom in the Church (and we can bring great authorities to confirm there was) that the catechumens, in all desperate diseases, or upon a certain prospect of death, when they were, as to this life (as we say) lost men, to be looked upon rather as dead than living, used to receive the baptismal laver; and so *Baptizari pro mortuis*, be interpreted to mean no more, than to be baptized for such as were accounted for dead men: how would this weaken the Apostle's reasoning? Must not an argument pressed from such a custom, rather convince such men, that, according to their own usage, there must be a resurrection, than destroy the strength of such an inference? I shall determine nothing of certainty of so uncertain a text (unless it be, that it signifies nothing to a purgatory); but thus much Epiphanius tells us,* "that it was in the sense of the first supposition, that tradition had interpreted those words of the Apostle, If the dead rise not, why are they then baptized for the dead?" And as to the catechumens, that they, by this their usage, declared for the resurrection of the dead. That the Apostle alluded to a particular manner of some men, it is plain, by the way in which he expresses it, "Why are they baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" By the one, referring to the manner of some particular men; in the other, respecting the general afflictions of all Christians, suffering, in hopes of the resurrection: and therefore, how a universal obligation of praying for the dead can be inferred from such a particular instance, as does not so much as glance at prayer, I conceive not. All that Bellarmine replies to this, is this, that *baptizantur* refers to all the Jews,† and that our Saviour did choose here rather to reason them into the belief of a resurrection from the old custom of the Jews, who used to pray for the dead, than the latter usage and manner of Christians: but is not this to answer one difficulty with another? How prepared the Cardinal was to make out such a custom amongst the Jews, as founded upon the commands of

* Epipha. Cerinthian. Hæres. 28. Καὶ τούτου ἕνεκα ἡ παράδοσις ἡ ἐλθοῦσα εἰς ἡμᾶς, φησί, τὸν αὐτὸν ἅγιον Ἀπόστολον εἰρηκέναι, εἰ ὄλως νεκροί, &c. p. 114. [Colon. 1682.]

† Bell. de Purg. cap. 6. at contra hanc, &c. [ut supra, p. 338. col. 2.]

God's law in the Scriptures, we may easily conjecture, by his sticking so close to his Apocryphal canon for it: and if such a custom was not founded upon the law of God, the Cardinal's reply is to no purpose, unless it be, to remember us of this answer, that, "Why are they baptized for the dead?" may be only mentioned here, as an argument *ad hominem*, made use of by the Apostle only to illustrate the truth of the resurrection, no ways delivered as a truth and doctrine approved here, and established by the Apostolical authority. It is more than probable that some of them, who had that custom amongst them, yet still denied the resurrection, because the Apostle does so pressingly, and with such a vehement iteration of their own custom, endeavour to convince them of the certainty of it; but then it must follow, that let those words signify what they will, they can be no argument for the recommendation of what they signify to our use and performance; and so the Papists are as far as ever from making out this doctrine of praying for the dead from this Scripture. Nor is this of its being used only as an argument *ad hominem* our own conjecture, but such a one as has the judgment of no less a Cardinal than Baronius* to support it. And now is not this an admirable way of founding articles of faith upon such Scriptures, which they dare not trust the Fathers to interpret, nor yet can accord in their own explications about them.

But now it will be time to inquire, how much stronger the Catholic Scripturist is in his other text, which is this: 1 John v. 16, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." As, when they find the word *fire* they presently discover the terrible flames of purgatory; so wherever they light upon the word *death*, or *dead*, they can immediately perceive that advantageous relief of praying for the dead. Was ever text so managed, as our Scripturist has handled this? If he makes any thing of it, I think it is only this, that it treats not of sins mortal, and sins venial. "There is a sin unto death,† says the Apostle, I do not say ye shall pray for it; and so we," says the Scripturist, "never pray for those whom we know to die unrepentant; and this is the true meaning of the place." Is this the true meaning? Then let me ask this Catholic expositor, do you pray for those whom

* Baron. Annal. tom. 1. Ann. 57. § 165, et 166. [p. 473, 474. Luc. 1738.]

† Cath. Script. p. 247.

ye know to live unrepentant ? That is, do you pray for those very sins, which ye know the sinner has not repented him of ? Yes, that they do, if the Scripturist* is in the right of it ; for they hold prayer lawfully and fruitfully made, for all sins whatever, during the lifetime of the sinner. But how this can agree with the true sense of the place, or be reconcileable with the Apostle's meaning, whom he acknowledges to have taught us here, that there is a sin unto death, for which he dares not say we shall pray, let the Scripturist explain. What is the true meaning of this place ? When the Apostle insinuates "there is a sin unto death," *i.e.* of that deadly provocation as shall never be forgiven, and therefore such as we can have no grounds to pray for, he does plainly teach us, we must not pray for the dead : when he speaks of a sin not unto death, he does then as plainly justify us in our prayers for the dead. I know not the way of breeding amongst the Catholic fathers, but should a Protestant sophister have inferred such a conclusion from such premises, he would certainly have been soon hissed out of our schools. Suppose the Apostle had spoke in the words of this Scripturist (with which he thinks to salve up all), there is a sin until death, and a sin not until death ; this would have informed us, that there remains no help by our prayers in this world, for final impenitence ; and so again, that we are to pray here for the penitent in this life ; but it must still remain a mystery, how the Apostle should hereby suggest, or recommend to us prayers for the dead. What is the Apostle doing in this chapter ? Is he not endeavouring to excite and stir us up to prayer, with the assurance that God will hearken to, and grant us our petition, if we ask any thing according to his will ? ver. 14. Again, does he not here give an instance what it is God is willing we should ask of him, and tell us, that if we see our brother sin a sin, yet if we experience withal, that he relents, and continues not obstinate and unrepentant in his sin (which certainly brings death, and shall be pardoned upon no prayers or intercessions), we may pray for such a sinner, and he shall be raised from the death of his sin, and restored unto the life of salvation upon our prayers : what is all this to praying for the dead ? Does he not strangely manifest his extraordinary knowledge in the Scriptures, when we hear him repeating this,† that we may pray for all sins before the death of the sinner, as a reason why St. John must necessarily in this place intend praying for the dead, since every novice can inform him, that we are no

* Cath. Script. *ibid.*

† Cath. Script. p. 248.

more to pray for all the sins of the living; than we are to pray for all the sins of the dead, if there be any force in these words of the Apostle. We may, no doubt, pray for the conversion of all sinners upon earth, and that God would give them a timely repentance in this life, but we must not pray for their impenitence, or that God would forgive them their sins unrepented of; and this must be the import of the Apostle's expression, who tells us not, that we are to pray for such sinners while living; or that we may not pray for them when dead; but only that he affirms not that we may pray for them at all. But is it not still more admirable to hear the Scripturist proving prayer for the dead from this text? * Because the Apostle speaks of their prayers who knew their brother to sin not unto death, that is, as he himself explains it, to have given signs of true repentance; which I warrant a man cannot give signs of true repentance till he is dead. The words are, "who sees his brother sin," which must suppose, that he that prays, and the sinner who is prayed for, are both in the same state as to place, *viz.* in this land of the living: and I believe, no man could have apprehended anything of the condition of the dead from this text, but he that has no life at all in his understanding. Good God! may not a man read his Bible all the days of his life, without the least apprehensions of a purgatory from such Scriptures as these be? Has not the Catholic Scripturist plainly destroyed his own undertaking, by appealing to such Scriptures, which, as they prove no prayer for the dead, so do they, according to his own measures, lead us to conclude that there is no purgatory. And thus much for his pretended principles from Scripture, inferring a purgatory.

PART II.

BUT we have not done yet; there remain still some ranks of more express texts, ushered in with all the wit and artifice of the most accomplished Bellarmine, which may require some stay, though give no great stop to this conclusion, no purgatory in the Scriptures. These are marshalled into two heads, some out of the Old, some out of the New Testament; out of both which, with great pomp, he proclaims there is a purgatory. † For the greater honour of the Old, he makes his first

* Cath. Script. in the same page.

† Bell. de Verbo Dei, lib. 1. c. 10. at the beginning, Hi libri simul omnes recipiuntur ab Hebræis. [Ibid. vol. 1. p. 18. col. 1.]

and most vigorous attempt out of the Apocrypha, as if that book, which he himself grants the Jews received not, was the best witness of their faith and devotion. I shall not spend time now in examining such proofs as those, which come not out of the Scriptures, but proceed to his more canonical quotations, whose authority is allowed by all sides. And first, Is it not very strange to find a purgatory pleaded for out of the Old law, which, though most express and particular in all things relating to prayers and sacrifices, yet insinuates not the least office for a deliverance out of that subterraneous captivity? Have not many of their own party doubted, and as many openly denied there was any purgatory before Christ, and indeed, does not the nature of the thing itself abundantly proclaim as much? For to what end should God enjoin them thus to pray and afflict themselves, for those tormented in such a state, out of which there was no possibility of relief or redemption for them then, there having been, according to their own principles, no entrance for any into heaven before Christ? Again, after all their sins were forgiven, which is the case of those in purgatory, what hindered, but they were as fit for *limbus patrum*, wherein the deceased are supposed to have been then detained from the glorious vision of God, which must have been torment enough to every righteous soul, as any other whatever. But to speak to the texts themselves alleged for proof hereof: Zech. ix. 11, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water;" is one of the strongest and most appealed to, and which Bellarmine concludes absolutely to refer to a purgatory.* But would it not be very expedient these arguers should determine amongst themselves, what is the true meaning of these words, before they found an article of faith upon them? Was *limbus patrum*, where all the purest saints are fancied to have resided with peace and sweet contentment, so very like or agreeable to purgatory, with all its fiery pangs and scorchings, as that God may have presented both in the same words and characters?† That this use is, and has been made of this text, to infer the one as well as the other, not only the Cardinal acknowledges, but Becanus‡ also tells us that Catholics commonly understand it either of *limbus*

* De Purg. lib. 1. cap. 3. § nonus locus. [Ibid. vol. 2. p. 330. col. 1.]

† Bell. de Purg. lib. 1. cap. 3. [Ibid.]

‡ Becan. de Purg. Calvin. p. 538. [Mogunt. 1609.]

patrum, or our purgatory : and one of their present champions applies it directly to a *limbus* ;* and then may not we with better reason conclude it alludes to neither of those two states, which are so irreconcilably different from each other ? Bel-larmine's† reason why it must be understood of a purgatory, and not *limbus patrum*, is this, because the lake mentioned here, is described to have been without water, whereas in *limbo patrum*, there are the sweet waters of consolation and refreshment : but how consistent is this with his own descriptions of purgatory in the fourth chapter of his second book, where he treats of the state of the souls held therein ? What ! is purgatory without water, without the least refrigeration or comfort ? Can they who have obtained the certainty of their salvation, even that certainty which excludeth all fear, remain without the least capacity of ease and refreshment ? Does not the Cardinal himself‡ tell us, that the Church, in the Canon of her Mass, prays for those in purgatory, under the denomination of such as sleep in the Lord ? And again, that those who sleep in the Lord, by reason of their certainty of salvation, perceive an incredible mixture of consolation with their torments : and then, if this reason of the Cardinal be no reason at all, why may not the others of them who interpret it of a *limbus*, be esteemed the more substantial expositors, and so the Papists without a purgatory in Scripture, for all such passages as this ? The meaning of this text is plain and easy to any one who reads the chapter, wherein he will perceive, that, though it may have had some respect to the redemption of Israel out of that horrible captivity of Babylon, where they had been destitute of the sweet refreshments, the refreshing streams springing from the true worship and sacrifices of God, which were not to be offered but at Jerusalem ; yet it had a more particular eye to the redemption of man out of the bottomless lake of everlasting damnation, by the strength of that covenant established in the blood of Christ : for does not the ninth verse in these words, “ Behold, thy King cometh unto thee : He is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass ;” plainly describe to us our blessed Redeemer hastening to the joyful triumph and accomplishment of our eternal blessedness upon the cross ? Has not the Holy Ghost, Matth. xxi. 8, applied to,

* Touchstone of Reformed Gospel, p. 80.

† Bell. *ibid.*

‡ Bell. de Purg. lib. 3. [lib. 2.] cap. 4. Sect. tertia, [Tertio,] quia ad finem capit.

and interpreted this very prophecy of Christ ? In a word, here is nothing in the circumstances of this place, which, according to their own principles, is applicable to a purgatory : for, first, the souls therein detained, can no ways be said to be the prisoners of Christ, because they are supposed to have obtained his full remission before their coming thither ; neither can any soul be said to be delivered from purgatory by the blood of his covenant, since they profess that this releasement is either to be purchased by the prayers of the living, or worked out by our own personal pains and torments.

Another place alleged by the Cardinal for the proof hereof, are those words of the Psalmist, Psal. lxii. 12 : “ We went through fire and water, and thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.” The former text asserted a purgatory, by making out to us a lake wherein is no water ; behold here both fire and water conspiring to make up a purgatory. We may observe here, that though Bellarmine is most positively confident in his vindication of the texts cited out of the Apocryphal books, yet as for those brought out of the canonical Scripture of the Old Testament, he neither justifies them with one argument, nor yet avouches any one of them upon his own word ; as to this before us, he says nothing for it, but that among divers explications, Origen understands it of a purgatory : but whoever examines Origen’s purgatory, will find his notion can give but little advantage to the chimera Bellarmine undertakes to maintain, neither will the Cardinal abide by the explication of Origen : and therefore we will answer him here in the words of an applauded bishop of their own, uttered by him upon the occasion of their misusing this very text to this purpose :* “ I approve not such trifling as this (says he), which explains these words of purgatory.” Indeed, if we read the Psalm, it is unaccountable to imagine how any men could possibly produce such a text for such a doctrine, wherein there appears not the least relation to, or countenance for a purgatory, unless it be in the word *fire* ; and they may as well derive it from hell fire, as that fire and water herein represented : for does not the Psalmist in the foregoing part of this very verse, repeat before the Almighty, “ thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads ?” And does that look like a state of purgatory ? Again, does he not in the 9th and 10th verses shew how God had proved and tried them as the silver is tried ; and ver. 13,

* Roffen. in Luth. Artic. 37. Quod alii sic nugantur, non probò.

14, manifest before the Lord, that he would now “go into his house with burnt-offerings, and pay him those vows which he had spoke with his mouth, and promised with his lips, when he was in those troubles.” Do not all these circumstances abundantly evince, that the fire and water, through which God had now brought them into the present ease and enjoyment of this world, was that fire of afflictions, miseries, and necessities, wherewith he had chastised and visited them in this life? And therefore, consequently, that the only inference deducible from these words must be, that of the Holy Ghost, “through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God.” And thus have we this text explained by Ribera,* a Jesuit, in his comment upon the last verse of the 13th of Zechariah, where he interprets those words, “I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried,” &c. thus this shews, says he, that Christians shall be exercised, tried, and approved by temptations and miseries, as we read Psal. lxvi. So that we may pass through the heat and terrors of this fire and water, and yet be never the more in danger of the parchings of their purgatory: what Jesuitical theology is this, to interpret such discourses as relate to afflictions and trials in this life, so as to establish thereby the fictitious pains and torments of the dead?

There are several other texts and places alleged by the Cardinal to the same purpose, as 1 Sam. xxxi: “The inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead, when they heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, fasted seven days;” and 2 Sam. i. where it is said, “David wept until even for Saul and for Jonathan, and the men that were with him.” “For though indeed,” says Bellarmine, “all this might have been the effects of grief and sorrow, occasioned by that dismal slaughter, yet it is credible it was to help and ease the souls of the dead, it seeming irrational for them to weep and fast seven days together upon any other account.” But first, is it only credible that it was to help out of purgatory? Then it is not certain and demonstrable, as those inferences which are to confirm and make out articles of faith ought to be: for though it be credible to any one who inspects his reasoning, that the Cardinal was here conscious of

* Rib. Com. in Zech. xiii. Num. xvii. significat Populum Christianum variis tentationibus exercendum atque probandum, ut fiat quasi aurum purissimum, ut Psal. lxvi. Transivimus, &c.

his own trifling, yet, I suppose, they wont infer it to be demonstration. 2. Why is it credible that, upon this news, they were struck more with the thoughts of the torments of purgatory, than with the apprehensions of the disgrace and ignominy redounding hereby to the people of Israel, whose prince thus became a prey and sacrifice to their enemies, which they knew was an evident manifestation of God's wrath against them? The text plainly lays before us the grounds and reason of this fasting, that it was for the house of Israel, and because they were fallen by the sword, ver. 12. *i. e.* because the name of Israel would hereby be reproached among the heathen; not because their deceased friends were to be tormented with the pains of the dead in purgatory. And therefore put the case it might have been irrational only for a testimony of sorrow, as the Cardinal suggests, to have fasted seven days, yet, I hope, twice seven days could not have been too many to have manifested the sense of their sins, which had thus provoked the Almighty to deliver them and their king, with infamy and slaughter, into the will of their enemies. But Bellarmine attempts farther to clear his argument, that it was for the good of the dead in purgatory, that they fasted seven days, from the use and custom of David, who used to fast and pray for the obtaining some gift or blessing from God, as in the case of the child, for whom he ceased praying when dead, and all hopes of enjoying him in this world were perished. But not to oppose the Cardinal in his conjecture, how can this possibly make out a purgatory? David, and the people, no doubt, proposed the obtaining of something by their prayers and seven days fasting; but why must that necessarily be, the ease and deliverance of the souls in purgatory? Was there nothing else to be obtained here? What may we think of God's acceptance of their humiliation? What of their endeavour herewith of appeasing the wrath of God, and an obtainment of the reconciliation of his mercy and compassion for the future? Was any thing of this kind also irrational? When David ceased his fasting, upon the death of his child, did he not teach us that the advantage and benefit of our prayers extend not to the dead? Is it not a very strange thing, that a man cannot mourn or lament for the loss of a father, brother, or a deceased friend, but such sorrow must immediately point out and direct us to a purgatory? The holy Apostle St. Paul indeed comforts and solaces such as sorrow for the dead, and endeavours to restrain and moderate their grief; but it is by assuring us the dead are

but asleep ; notwithstanding the suitableness of the opportunity, he gives not the least hint of any racking pains they endure in the way to rest ; neither does he bid us comfort ourselves with the hopes or assurance that our prayers and intercessions shall obtain, or hasten their releasement out of them : so that we may conclude the Apostle's thoughts were far different from those of the Cardinal, applying the sense of our sorrows for the departed to the apprehension of a purgatory.

Another text produced by the Cardinal, is out of Micah vii. 8, 9 : “ Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy : when I fall, I shall arise : when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me.” If we mind the whole chapter, the sense and proper meaning of it will appear to be this ; the holy prophet, in the first part of it, represents the great sins and iniquities of Jerusalem, that such was the degeneracy of Israel, “ that the best of them was become a brier, and the most upright sharper than a thorn hedge,” ver. 4 ; that therefore God's vengeance and destructions were upon them, to pursue their transgressions with his justice. And then again, as is usual in all the denunciations of God's wrath against his people, in the person of Jerusalem, the holy prophet manifests some remains of the Divine love and mercy still reaching towards them, admonishes Babylon not to insult over her ; for though she was now laid waste and destroyed by her, yet should she be raised again and become rebuilt in glory ; though she should thus bear the indignation of the Lord, for this reason, because she had sinned, yet afterwards, upon her repentance and amendment, should God plead her cause against her enemy (*viz.* Babylon), and execute judgment for Jerusalem, repair those wounds and breaches now made in her, in the ease and glory of her posterity. This is the plain and proper import of the chapter, and therefore this place can respect only the present miseries and afflictions befalling us in this life. As to purgatory, here is not so much as any one circumstance which resembles it : for first, the wrath of God, which Jerusalem now bore, was that uttered against the heaviest sins, and most intolerable apostasy from his law, even those mortal sins which condemn not to purgatory, which were not to be purged, or done away by its fiercest satisfactions. 2. It is no ways agreeable to the souls in purgatory, to have the reason of their fall and condemnation thither, represented

with such aggravations of the greatest sins and transgressions, because they are released from the guilt of sin in this life ; and sent thither only to recover some unwary slips and venial deflections. As for the Cardinal, he only mentions this text to make up his number, says nothing for it himself, throws his own delusion upon St. Jerome, whom yet Ribera* in his comment upon the place, cites in favour of the quite contrary explication, *viz.* the very same exposition which we have given before.

Another of his places cited, is the ninth chapter of Isaiah, the 18th verse : “ Wickedness burns as a fire, it shall devour the briers and the thorns.” The clear sense and meaning of the prophet in this place, is apparent enough from ver. 9, where he begins the description of the pride and haughtiness of Israel ; and admonishes them of the vengeance of God pouring forth all her enemies upon her ; and therefore when he tells us in this verse that wickedness burneth like a fire, it is the wickedness of these enemies of Israel whom the prophet meaneth, and whom God would now permit to devour, not all the people, *viz.* not those who yet worshipped and obeyed aright, but the thorns and briers, the most lewd and sinful persons amongst them. But now how the devouring the thorns and briers, which denote the most grievous and mortal sinners, can intimate those venial transgressions which the fire of purgatory may consume, wear away, and satisfy for, I shall leave to these framers of a purgatory to explain.

Another text is out of the third chapter of Malachi, and the 3rd verse : “ And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver.” Who this Refiner and Purifier is, whom the prophet speaks of in this chapter, it is plain in the first verse, *viz.* that Lord, even the Messenger of the Covenant renewed by the Father in his Son Christ, whom our fathers before, and all Christians now, delight in. 2ndly, The end and purpose of this purification and refining by fire, is also clear in the latter end of the third verse, *viz.* “ that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness.” And therefore, 3rdly, the persons to be thus refined and purified, by the efficacious operation of this fire of God’s Holy Spirit, could be none but

* Ribera in locum : Ita Hieronymus et alii. Ne læteris, O Babylon, de ruina mea, quæ mihi nunc à Propheta prædicta est ; eram à te expugnata, sed iterum ædificabor.

the sons of Levi, the priests and congregations of Israel conversant in this life at the time of Christ's coming and appearance; the end of this Refiner being to repair and qualify such to pay those sacrifices and oblations as may become pleasant unto the Lord, ver. 4. In a word, the prophet in this place foretels the expiation, and cleansing of our hearts by the Holy Ghost given by Christ, and therefore he is said by the fire of his Holy Spirit, to warm our souls, to purge and cleanse them, as the fire purgeth and cleanseth metals, by separating and throwing off their dross; and in this sense, the Spirit of Christ, *i. e.* by which he is said to renew and purify us from our corruptions and filthiness, is frequently by the prophets entitled the spirit of fire, and the spirit of burning, particularly Isa. iv. 4; which place also is alleged for the confirmation of purgatory, but with what ground let the Cardinal* determine, who in his argument from this place, acknowledges the refining and purging mentioned in this place, to relate merely to the living, whereas that respects only the dead; for he may as well infer the dead to be the living, as from this purifying the living by the Spirit of God, conclude a purging and satisfying for the sins of the dead in another state. And thus we have taken a view of their whole force and strength in the Old Testament; and I persuade myself there cannot be a greater argument of the weakness of their cause, a clearer refutation of their shameful obtrusions of this state on the faith and belief of a Christian's conscience, than what the naked recital and examination of their own proofs must necessarily evince.

I proceed now to their conclusions and deductions from the New Testament.

The first text that we meet cited by Bellarmine, is Matth. xii. 32: "But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." The main stress of the argument from these words, lies in that expression, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come;" that is, as Bellarmine and his followers understand it, neither in this world, nor in purgatory. Indeed St. Augustine seems to infer some future remission of sins after this life from this text, but what remission, or of what sins, he declares he dares not aver; so that his conjecture was far from the Cardinal's present imagination of a purgatory, which determines what is remitted, *viz.* the guilt of some

* Bell. de Purg. [lib. 1.] cap. 3. §. locus decimus. [ut supra, p. 330.]

light miscarriages ; and also the way how it is remitted, *viz.* by a determinate endurance of pains and torments.

Secondly, Whatever remission that holy Father conceived should be hereafter, it could be only a thing probable and conjectural, and therefore no ground for an article of faith (which he tells us is to be founded on plain and indubitable Scripture), because he himself was both doubtful and uncertain of it ; as is apparent in four distinct places of his writings.* I confess it seems very strange to me, how the world to come should here signify purgatory, which is fixed in an intermediate space of time between a man's death and the resurrection ; since the Scriptures do so generally understand by it the day of judgment, or the time after the resurrection ; as we read particularly Luke xx. 35 : "Those that shall be accounted worthy to enjoy that world, and the resurrection from the dead." The coming of Christ to judgment is every where represented to us as the end of this world, so that the other must commence from the time of his coming to judgment ; and this,† if considered, will take off all pretences of impertinence in these words of our Saviour, without that purgatory remission, which the Cardinal infers as a salvo for our Saviour's discretion, in expressing himself in these terms, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come ;" for is it any impertinence or uncouthness to say, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is a sin of that dreadful account, as shall neither be allowed pardon in this world by the absolution of men, nor be pronounced or proclaimed pardoned by Christ himself at the day of judgment ; when he shall perfect and consummate the remission or punishment entered here on earth, when he shall call the righteous, "Come, ye blessed," give the final impression to their pardon ; but against the ungodly pronounce, "Go, ye cursed ;" eternally bind up those sins which have, or ought to have been bound on earth ? And that which may confirm this explication, is the use and manner of the Scriptures themselves, which all along express the time for the retributions of rewards and punishments to be the day of judgment, as Matth. xxv. 32, 33 ; and indeed, this is elegantly explained by the Cardinal

* St. Aug. Enchirid. ad Laurentium, cap. 66, et cap. 68. vol. ii. [p. 598, 599. Bassan. 1797.] Juxta finem in Octo Quæst. ad Dulcit. Quæst. 1. De Fide et Operibus, cap. 16. [Ibid. p. 546.]

† De Purg. [lib. 1.] cap. 4. et Respondeo non sequi, &c. sed tamen sequi secundum Regulam prudentiæ ; quia facerem Dominum ineptissime locutum ; inepte enim diceret hoc, &c. [vol. 2. p. 331. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

himself,* shewing us how, though a particular sentence passes upon every man in the day of his particular trial after death, yet the same is said to be done at the last day, and that properly too, because then it is published before the whole world, to the greatest honour of the righteous, and the highest infamy and reproach of the ungodly: and does the Scripture any where suggest to us under the title of the world to come, any place or state distinct from heaven or hell? so that without inferring a third place in the world to come for remission of sins, according to Bellarmine himself, our Saviour's manner of speaking, may be allowed most clear and expressive.

Secondly, Since blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is here expressed a sin of the most unpardonable provocation to God, since our Saviour repeats it with the highest abhorrency, telling us twice, that though all other sins and blasphemies may be forgiven, yet still that against the Holy Ghost shall not: may we not very agreeably to the whole narration here aver, that our Lord makes use of that expression, "neither in this world, nor in the world to come," rather by way of aggravation, or to express still the greater heinousness of the sin, than tacitly to infer, that there remains a remission and forgiveness of other sins in the world to come; rather to shew that this sin shall be eternally unpardonable, or as St. Mark expresses, ver. 14, never be forgiven at all, than to teach us that other sins and transgressions not forgiven in this, may yet be remitted in the world to come, and that too, before we enter into the other world, which is the case of remission had by purgatory. All that I find replied by the Cardinal† to this, is that by a like aggravation we may shuffle off hell itself, and call it an aggravation when our Lord condemns the wicked, "Go you into everlasting burnings:" but by what logic, or from what premises he draws his conclusion, it is past my capacity to conjecture: our Lord in divers places, and upon several opportunities, expressly tells us, "that the portion of the wicked shall be everlasting burnings:" well, therefore, when he says, "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come," he must either be understood to insinuate a remission of sins in pur-

* Bell. *ibid.* cap. 5. ad secundum dico, in fine. Et tamen dicuntur hæc eadem fieri in novissimo judicio, quia tunc fiet coram toto mundo manifestissime, et cum summo honore justorum, et ignominia impiorum, &c. [p. 334. col. 1.]

† Bell. de Purg. cap. 4. sect. 8. [sect. 2.] At contra, &c. [*Ibid.* p. 330. col. 2.]

gatory, or we may as reasonably conclude that there is no such punishment as hell fire. Is not the Cardinal more impertinent in this induction, than he would infer our Saviour's expression to be, were there no purgatory remission after this life? That this expression is hyperbolical and figurative, St. Mark manifestly insinuates, briefly comprehending this more figurative and ample circuition of St. Matthew in that short speech, *Non remittetur in æternum*, "shall never be forgiven." Indeed, Bellarmine* says, St. Mark is no interpreter of St. Matthew, but his reason for it is beyond the Cardinal himself, viz. because St. Matthew writ more copiously and largely, and St. Mark's Gospel is but a compendium of St. Matthew: as if that man which contracts another man's meaning, and that too by the guidance of an infallible Spirit, were not to be allowed a competent judge of his intentions. Or, again, as if the more flourishing and rhetorical were to determine and over-rule the more concise and comprehensive. It is certain St. Mark, who was guided by the same Spirit with St. Matthew, has delivered nothing different from, or discording with St. Matthew's meaning; and therefore, since the whole tendency of the Scriptures may incline us this way, and St. Mark has explained it to this purpose, must it not be most consequential to infer, that, to be forgiven neither in this world, nor in the world to come, imports no more but this, "shall never be forgiven." As for this induction which the Cardinal makes,† either our Saviour spake the words as St. Matthew relates them, or as St. Mark, or as both: if as St. Matthew, or as both, we have gained our point, it will in no measure advantage his cause: for though he spoke the very words of St. Matthew, yet he meant no more by them than St. Mark has explained: so that by consequence, they are very far from evincing a third place for remission of sins after death; or instructing us, that that remission in the world to come, which he here denies of the sin against the Holy Ghost, he tacitly insinuates to be competent to other sins. The Cardinal himself acknowledges such an inference as this to be no good logic; and to argue by way of instance: when the Scriptures affirm hypocrisy is a sin so hateful to God, that he cannot bear it, may we rationally infer, that there be some other sins of that nature, that his infinite purity can bear with them? Is it not more clear to affirm, that by this expression the Scriptures only manifest the grievousness

* Bell. quo supra. §. Respondeo non debere. [p. 331. col. 2.]

† Bellarm. ibid.

of this sin of hypocrisy, but no ways tacitly affirm God can endure and bear with other sins? So that according to the way of the Scriptures themselves, we may say that our Saviour in these words only aggravates the odiousness of the sin against the Holy Ghost, shewing it shall never be forgiven, but no ways advises us, that there are other sins which may be forgiven, if not in this, yet in the world to come. As to what the Cardinal alleges,* of the impropriety of this expression, "neither in this world, nor in the world to come," if there were no remission in the world to come, it is impertinent, and to no purpose, since those words do fully answer the purpose of our Saviour, and with the greater vehemency deny all remission whatever to that sin. And although it would be improper to say, I will marry neither in this world, neither in the world to come, because there is no such thing as marrying, and giving in marriage there; yet it follows not that it must be as improper to say, it shall neither be remitted in this world, neither in the world to come, because, though there is no remission for sins not remitted in this world, yet all remission is said to be confirmed there, and the Scriptures usually acquaint us that our final doom and sentence shall be pronounced at the judgment-seat of Christ.

Thirdly, That this text advantageth not the Popish purgatory, is further clear, because it treats of the remission itself of sin, not satisfaction for some light failures, which is the chiefest remission of their purgatory. All that the Cardinal has to reply here, is no more but this, that in purgatory, there is also a remission of venial faults. To which I answer, that venial sins, as they call them, have nothing to do with this place; for since they are the most mortal sins and blasphemies, to which our Lord here compares the sin against the Holy Ghost, declaring that though they might be forgiven, yet this should not, neither in this, nor in the world to come: must it not follow, that if any remission in the world to come be to be inferred from these words of our Lord, it must certainly be a remission of mortal sins; and so the Cardinal as far to seek as ever for the establishment of his purgatory, since from thence they profess all mortal sins excluded, so as that there is no remission at all for them there. The Cardinal makes an offer of a return to this, but it is such a one as may quite end the controversy of a purgatory from this text; for he says, our

* Ibid.

Saviour spake here of a complete and perfect remission, which comprehends the remission both of the sin and the punishment,* in which manner the most grievous sins are said to be remitted in another world, for this reason, because their remission is completed there. But, first, what is all this to venial sins, or the remission had in purgatory, which, according to his own principles, has nothing to do with grievous sinners? Again, how can the completion or perfection of all remission belong to purgatory, when the Scriptures every where refer it to the last judgment of Christ? Secondly, If the most grievous sins are said to be remitted in the other world, for this reason, because their remission is completed there, then why may not this expression, “shall be forgiven neither in this world, neither in the world to come,” signify one and the same remission, the one, *viz.* that “in the world to come,” being only a confirmation, and completion of the other? Thirdly, If the remission “in the world to come” be the same with that in this life, only in a higher and more comprehensive perfection completing it, then how can these words infer a third state, for remission of such sins as are no ways remitted in this world? Indeed, according to the doctrine of Christianity, though not according to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, the remission of the punishment always accompanies the remission of the sins, but yet it will not follow, that this text of Scripture, which treateth of the remission of sins only, is agreeable, or applicable, much less demonstrative of their purgatory, wherein they pretend only to a remission of punishment, and some penal satisfaction for such sins as are already remitted in this world. And thus I think, by the help of the Cardinal, we have sufficiently disappointed them of the assistance of this text, in the support of their purgatory.

The next place alleged, is 1 Cor. iii. 15, “Shall be saved, yet so as by fire.” The Cardinal tells us,† this is one of the obscurest, but yet most profitable texts; so illustriously manifest is their cause in the Scriptures, that its advantages are the deepest obscurities; and its clearest light treasured up in the profoundest darkness. He also tells us it is reckoned by St. Augustine amongst those difficult sentences St. Peter

* Bell. ubi supra: et tertio Respondeo, Christus loquitur de perfecta Remissione, quæ complectitur Remissionem culpæ, et pœnæ, quomodo gravissima peccata remittuntur in alio seculo, quia ibi completur eorum Remissio. [p. 331. col. 1.]

† Bell. de Purg. cap. 5. lib. 1. in initio. [Ibid. col. 2.]

speaks of, which many wrest to their own destruction; and therefore we may all conclude, what an incomparable foundation it must be, whereon to bottom an article of faith. If we consider the circumstances of the whole place, we shall find them in no respect suiting with their purgatory: for ver. the 13th, the Apostle tells us, the fire here spoken of, is that whereby "every man's work shall be made manifest," and therefore, consequently, that all men, both bad and good, both Apostles and others, shall pass through the trial and examination of that fire here mentioned; which agrees not with their notion of purgatory, from which Apostles and saints are wholly to be exempted. 2. As the examination of this fire extends itself to all men, so is its force and operation said to exert itself upon the works, not the persons of every man, as in the latter part of the 13th verse, "The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is;" and so again, verse 14, 15, "If any man's work abide," or "if any man's work shall be burnt." Whereas the fire of their purgatory has nothing to do with the works of men, which are supposed to be accepted before an entrance therein, but wholly exerciseth its sting and punishment upon the very souls of men. 3. If we consider the day which shall thus declare our works, we shall perceive that can no ways agree with their chimerical purgatory: for though the text tells us it shall be revealed in fire, yet some interpret this revelation by fire, of the final conflagration of the world; others, of such a one as shall flame out at the day of God's final judgment; the last of which, Bellarmine* acknowledges to be the general opinion of the Fathers, and also admits of, and allows it, for the most true. Now, how from this fire, which shall be revealed at the day of judgment, we may infer a present fire-purging and cleansing the souls of men immediately after their departure out of this life, I confess I want the Cardinal's dexterity to make out. I suppose, according to their own principles, the fire of purgatory shall be no more then (whatever it is now) at that last judgment, and therefore, how this description or insinuation of that examining and determining flame which shall thus search and prove the works of all men then, can declare or manifest to us this purging fire at present, out of which millions shall have escaped before, and into which, perhaps, millions shall never enter, *viz.* all remaining here in the flesh at that terrible day

* Bell. de Purg. lib. 1. cap. [5.] Sect. Tertio quia Græcus, in the end of the paragraph.

of the Lord, some of the Cardinal's disciples would do very well to explain to us. As to all the particulars of this text, such as are foundation, builders, gold, silver, wood, hay, stubble, nay, the fire which shall try every man's work what sort it is, the Cardinal,* with Protestants, interprets to have an improper, and metaphorical meaning, and then what agreement can this clause bear to the rest, if taken properly, and in its literal signification? Bellarmine confesses one or two apparent equivocations in his own exposition, understanding, "whose works the fire shall try," of a metaphorical and figurative fire; but "shall be saved so as by fire," of a material and afflicting fire: but it is the incoherence of his own imaginary doctrines, not any variations in the text itself, which forced and obliged him thereunto: for if we understand the whole in a metaphorical way, we do no violence, but altogether clear up the Apostle's meaning; for as to that clause *ὥς διὰ πυρὸς*, "so as by fire," upon which all his stress depends; this certainly clearly manifests, that fire is here mentioned only figuratively or by way of likeness, or resemblance; as who should say, his works shall perish in the fire, but the workman shall escape, yet, with that difficulty and hazard, as if that examining fire had got hot hold on, and been ready to devour him; now the Cardinal acknowledges that examining fire to be metaphorical: indeed the Apostle seems carefully to have obviated the impropriety of the acceptation of that word fire here, by the interposition of that particle (*ὥς*), nor can the grammatical construction any ways help out the Cardinal's imagination of such a material fire, which, by its pains and tortures, should actually save and restore the person tortured therein, unto life. As for what the Cardinal alleges from those words, "If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss,"† inferring, that it meaneth, that such a person shall receive a punishment: though a loss and punishment are very different things; the one being inflicted on us by another, the other many times the effect of a man's personal negligence and error; yet, if we agree with the Cardinal in this *punctilio*, it will not follow, that the punishment referred to here must necessarily be a punishment by fire. Is not the loss of all his labours, and the experiencing them to be rather the works of damnation than leading to a reward, a very heavy punishment? As for any other, there is not the least colour

* Bell. *ibid.*

† *Ibid.* Sect. Secundo ignis iste, in the end. [p. 335. col. 2.]

or pretence from the words. The most material objection I find made to this explication, is this, that if the words, “so as by fire,” are not to be understood of a material and tormenting fire;* then those builders who are said to build, gold, silver, and precious stones, may as properly be said to escape so as by fire, as the raisers up of hay, wood and stubble; and so that distinction which the Apostle plainly suggests to be between them, insignificant, and to no purpose. But this is easily removed, if we observe, that, though they are all subject to this fire of trial and examination, yet they are not all obnoxious to the like hazard and danger by it; for though it consumes and destroys the one (*viz.* the wood, hay and stubble), yet it does but illustrate, and make more manifest the worth and perfections of the other, *viz.* the gold, silver, and precious stones. As I suppose two men of unequal qualifications may run through the same examination, though the one with no hazard, but rather advantageous to his reputation: so that as wood, hay, and stubble, which refer to such false and unwarrantable doctrines, as men shall be accountable for at the fiery examination of God’s fiercest judgment, bear no relation at all to venial sins, which a small penance, perhaps a supernumerary *Ave Maria*, may wipe off in this life, or at most, a few pangs in purgatory, clear us from, long before that terrible day, which shall declare our works; so is the fire here mentioned, to try every man’s work of what sort it is, far from the nature of their purgatory scorplings, because they are only to purge and satisfy, these to examine and make trial; in a word, the one is a probatory, the other a purgatory fire. There are those indeed, which interpret this fire of those tribulations and afflictions wherewith God often examines our works and doctrines in this life, particularly St. Augustine and Gregory the Great, whose dreams and delusions seem to have given the first occasion to this chimerical purgatory; but I shall not determine the time when God will exercise and examine us with this fiery trial, it being sufficient to shew, that the nature of this examining fire, let it happen when it will, is no ways suitable to that imaginary one, fancied to be now burning in purgatory, the property of that being to try works, but the efficacy of this, to afflict and punish souls; and that this place is thus to be understood metaphorically, we might confirm by divers of their own expositors: besides

* Bell. *ibid.* §. Denique sequeretur, in the beginning. [p. 334. col. 2.]

many pressing arguments urged by Erasmus,* to evince that it makes neither for venial sins, nor a purgatory, for which Bellarmine declares it so profitable, Suarez† cites Sedulius, Lyranus, Cajetan, and others, interpreting it almost in our very words, though indeed, he himself will have the whole place understood of a proper and material fire ; but he‡ brings no better inducements to determine us on his side, than Bellarmine offers to make out, that though fire in one part of the text must be meant allegorically, yet “so as by fire,” must necessarily be taken in a literal and proper meaning : indeed the instance by which the Cardinal undertakes to make it appear to us, that it was the manner and custom of St. Paul, thus to use the same word in divers senses in the same sentence, is most remarkable, and does abundantly evince, that the Cardinal’s§ wit was more put to it to make out this point, than his conscience concerned for laying down the truth : the text appealed to is this, “He hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin ;” here the word *sin* is to be taken in as different an acceptation, as the word *fire* in the former place. What ! was he made mortal sin, who knew only venial sins, or how is sin here taken in a different meaning ? Indeed to be made sin, and to know sin, have different meanings, but then they are also different sentences ; but as for the word sin, that imports the very same in relation to them both ; as to his being made sin, it means no other than that that spotless Lamb was sent by God to be the sacrifice for our mortal sins ; and the punishment he underwent shews, that the sins imputed to him, or for which in our stead he accounted, were those very sins which he knew not, that is, which he had not been personally concerned in committing. What agreement is here with sins different, such as mortal and venial, with a resemblance of a metaphorical and a proper fire ? Or because we meet the one expression, what countenance can it give to the other inference and deduction ? They were the same mortal transgressions which the Apostle intimated in the one place, and it was no doubt, one and the same metaphorical fire which he represents and alludes to in the other : but thus it is, when men will appeal to Scripture for the confirmation of such doctrines as differ from the very spirit and letter of the

* Eras. in locum. [p. 470. Basil. 1542.]

† Suarez. tom. 4. in Thom. disput. 45. Sect. 1. Num. 25.

‡ Ibid. Sect. 1. Num. 28.

§ Bell. quo supra Sect. Secundo dico non esse insuetum, &c. [p. 336. col. 2.]

Scriptures, that they are compelled to such irrational and un-concluding misapplications.

And thus I proceed to another place insisted on for the justification of a purgatory by the Cardinal, and that is, Matth. v. 25, 26, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." How! shall he by no means come out thence, until he himself has paid his utmost farthing? Then how can this prison be imagined to be purgatory, out of which by the means of the prayers and masses of the living, the dead are every day supposed to come forth, discharged from all payments to be made by themselves? Bellarmine tells us, St. Chrysostom understands this place in its literal meaning, that is, as having respect purely to enforce peace and reconciliation with our neighbour in this life; and Emanuel Sa* testifies, St. Jerome explains it of a reconciliation and peace to be made with our enemies in this world. If we consider the design of the whole chapter, which was an enforcement of those Christian virtues, whereby we might ensure to ourselves peace and happiness here in this world, as well as comfort and felicity in that which is to come, we shall perceive no inconsistency or impropriety in such an interpretation; for though Bellarmine insinuates, Christ would not have so positively inferred, "he should not go thence till he hath paid the utmost farthing;" had he meant only the imprisonment of offenders against the law of man in this world, out of which they most frequently escape, without such payment; yet as Theophylact upon the xiiith chapter of St. Luke suggests, this might be for the greater terror, and more effectually to allure men and carnal minds to love and agreement, with the frightfullest prospect of those severities they seem most to dread; I say, it may very consistently, and agreeably to our Saviour's intention in the chapter, thus be taken in its most obvious and literal meaning: but it is, and hath been often explained in an allegorical manner, but yet with no regard or advantage to their purgatory, as shall plainly be evinced out of their expositors. Thus Maldonat† in his comment upon the place, gives us this clear

* Schol. in loc.

† Maldon. in Matth. v. 25. Adversarius noster est ille quem lædimus, quem ræca aut stultum appellavimus, qui actionem apud Deum contra nos

and familiar account of it : our adversary here intimated, says he, is that man whom we have offended, whom we have abusively called Raca, and fool, for which he shall implead us at God's tribunal : the way, is the time of this life ; the judge, Christ, who shall then tell us, what we have done to the least of his we have done to himself : the officer is the devil, or some evil spirit by whom God afflicts sinners ; the prison is hell ; and the last farthing, the least sins and offences : and that this expression of paying the last farthing, is proverbially used, to signify one to be punished after the utmost rigour. And then further, when our Saviour tells us, he shall not go thence till he has paid his last farthing ; his meaning, says he, is not, that he should go out afterwards, but, as St. Augustine expresses it, that he shall not go out at all, for this reason, because those in hell, for every mortal sin, stand indebted in infinite punishment, which it is impossible they should ever be able to satisfy. And Stella,* in his comment upon the xiith chapter of St. Luke, farther explains the same in this manner : if a man, says he, should infer from these words, until he has paid, that when he has paid he shall be released, he would not err, but then this would be the same as never ; because there is no end of infinite, and this particle *donec* in Scripture, signifies eternity. And to oppose an equal match for the Cardinal, Tolet (who was both a Jesuit, and the first Cardinal of their order), in his comment upon the same place of St. Luke, explains it to the very same effect, telling us that it is to be applied to that man who dies without remission obtained in this life ; he shall certainly be sent to the prison of hell, until he satisfies his debt ;† not that he shall one day satisfy it, and

habet : Via est hujus vitæ tempus : Judex Christus, qui dicturus, quod uni ex his minimis fecistis ; mihi fecistis : Minister dæmon malus, qui in torquendis damnatis Deo ministerium præbet : Carcer infernus : quadrans minima culpa : ad quadrantem solvere, pro summo jure puniri proverbio dicebatur. Et postea : quod autem dicit, nos inde non exituros, donec ultimum quadrantem persolvamus, non significat, ut ait Augustinus, exituros postea ; sed nunquam exituros : Quia qui in inferno sunt, cum semper debitas pœnas solvant, quia pro quolibet mortali peccato infinitas pœnas debent, nunquam persolvunt. [p. 121. Mogunt. 1596.]

* Stella in Luc. cap. 12. Non intelligas quod aliquando exiet, quia *donec* particula in Sacris literis æternitatem significat, &c.

† Ann. 89, et 90. Applicatur dictum ei qui ante Tribunal Dei comparebit sine pœnitentia et remissione peccati in hac vita [hoc seculo] facti ; mittetur profecto in carcerem inferni, quousque satisfaciat debito ; non quod aliquando satisfaciet, id enim nunquam fiet, nec eripietur in æternum ; sed id solum dicitur, quod non aliter liberabitur ; et iste sensus est germanus et parabolæ accommodatus. [p. 775. col. 1. Colon. Agr. 1611.]

so be released, for that shall never be, neither shall he be released for ever; but our Saviour uses this way of expression to shew there is no other, and so by consequence, no way at all of escaping or getting out. And this is most proper and agreeable to the parable. And thus you see not only we Protestants in favour of a heresy, but some plain-dealing Jesuits in vindication of the truth, do honestly confront the Cardinal in his proofs of a purgatory.

The main particulars on which he grounds the strength of his reasonings, from this text, are these two: 1st, our Saviour's making use rather of the similitude of a debtor, which relates, I warrant, to venial sins, than a murderer, or an adulterer, whose offences are mortal indeed. The 2nd, the force of this particle *donec*, which he would have to signify a time of releasement after payment. But to the first, did not the Cardinal remember his *Pater Noster*, and that Christ himself has there comprehended the most mortal offences, under that expression, "forgive us our debts?" Can any sin be believed more mortal than those which are there numbered amongst our debts to God? Had the Cardinal been more intent upon his prayers, he could never have been so zealously bent towards the maintaining such errors with such triflings as this. As to the 2nd, the force of the particle *donec*, is it not a wonder to see so great a Cardinal sheltering himself with so ignorant a shuffle? Is not this word frequently used in the Scriptures with respect to eternity, as Psalm cx., "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" Were his enemies no sooner to be made his footstool, but Christ was to be displaced from the right hand of God, or do these words oppose his eternal continuance at God's right hand? This, I think, no Christian will affirm, that believes the Nicene Creed, when it obliges us to confess his kingdom shall have no end. Again, the use of this particle is so frequent in Scripture, that Theophylact, in his comment upon the first chapter of Matthew, tells us it is the property of the Scriptures to use it in this latitude, and from the force of *donec peperit*, with St. Jerome, concludes Joseph never knew Mary at all; to be sure they signify not that he knew her afterwards, which I suppose the worshippers of the holy Virgin, and defenders of her perpetual virginity, will no ways oppose. And as for the inference the Cardinal draws from these words, "he knew her not till she had brought forth," viz. that they signified she should certainly bring forth: whatever it was to his purpose,

yet it was no ways agreeable to the scope of the place, which was now to signify the entire chastity of her virginal purity, when she conceived and brought forth our blessed Lord; not to demonstrate his birth, or that she should bear him: and therefore I shall conclude the controversy from these words, with the words of Jansenius,* telling us, first, that no man can justly plead for a purgatory from this place. And again, that the design and tendency of the parable, sheweth that the particle *donec* manifests not that the debt here mentioned shall one day be paid, but that the extremest justice shall be executed upon such a debtor; and that he that shall unjustly offend his neighbour, and so make him his adversary, and afterwards will not endeavour a satisfaction and reconciliation, whilst he is in the way here in this life, but defer all till the day that God cometh to judgment, shall then feel the fearfullest judgment of God; and because he must be incapable to pay the debt then, be tormented with everlasting punishment. This is clear, without force or straining, and therefore this prison far different from the gaol of purgatory.

And thus have I done with the Cardinal: but there have been other wits at work since, and attempted to strengthen their arguments with such additions as these, the first of Peter, the 3rd chapter, the 19th verse, “By which also he went, and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah.” Our modern arguers now, conclude here is a clear and manifest illustration of their purgatory, in this very dark and mystical insinuation of Christ’s preaching in that very Spirit, by which he was raised from the dead, to the spirits in prison, in the days of Noah. Bellarmine indeed, in his fourth book *de Christo*, and thirteenth chapter, makes use of these words to prove Christ’s descent *ad inferos*; contrary to the exposition and opinion of St. Augustine, but he brings them not to establish his reasonings about purgatory, and therefore we may conclude him most inclinable to the opinion of Salmeron,† who tells us, that though some understand them of a purgatory, yet they are much more to the purpose of a *limbus patrum*: and indeed Salmeron urges them as a manifest demonstration of a *limbus*, against Beza, taking them in

* Jansen. Concord. in locum, cap. 20. pag. 108. non potest quis recte ex hoc loco urgere probationem Purgatorii, &c. vid. locum. [p. 289. Lovan. 1572.]

† Salm. in loc.

another sense : but if they are so manifest for a *limbus*, with what face can they thus distort, and apply them to evince a place so different from it as purgatory ? Though the place is obscure and difficult, yet it is not so intricate, but that we may clearly perceive it has nothing to do with purgatory : for, first, it is clear from the words, that the Spirit in which he is said here to preach to the souls in prison, was that very Spirit by which he was raised from the dead, which could be no other but as Œcumenius, cited by Salmeron, in his comment upon the place, explains it, the Spirit of his divinity : by reason he could not be raised from the grave by virtue of any other spirit whatever ; and therefore this preaching could have no relation at all to souls in a separate state : which if he visited, it was in the Spirit of his soul ; and therefore Bellarmine* concludes, that the Spirit here mentioned signifies his soul ; and Suarez† avers the true meaning of the text to be this, *Solâ animâ Christum prædicasse*, “ That Christ preached in his soul only : ” which is, in direct words, to contradict the holy Apostle, telling us, that “ being put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit,” ver. 18, by which Spirit he went and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient in the days of Noah ; which manifestly suggests to us, that this going forth to preach, was in the Spirit of his divinity, and before his appearance in the flesh ; and therefore no ways to be understood of his preaching the Gospel after his death, and before his resurrection, to those who remained in certain receptacles of the earth. But, secondly, that they were the souls of men living in this world, and not the souls of those departed, to whom in this Spirit of his divinity Christ is said here to have preached, further appears from the very text, which tells us, That the souls to whom he preached, were such as were then disobedient, and that the time of their disobedience, was before the flood, when the ark was building : and therefore that long-suffering of God, which St. Peter speaks of, must denote Christ’s patience, who had called those men, living thus in disobedience, to repentance by his Holy Spirit, preaching to them by the tongue of Noah : and giving them farther testimonies of his love and mercy to them, by that “ preacher of righteousness,” in the time that the ark was a building, which was a fair warning of their ap-

* Bell. de Christo, lib. 4. [cap. 13.] Para. exposit. 2. [ut supra, vol. 1. p. 254. col. 2.]

† Suarez. tom. 2. in Thom. Quest. 52. Art. 1. Disput. 42. sect. 1.

proaching destruction, and therefore might well have won them to repentance. What is there here any ways agreeable to the souls of the dead? Besides, since they were the disobedient to whom Christ is said to have preached in his Spirit; it is manifest, that according to their own principles, it could not be those detained in *limbo patrum*, for they were the obedient preachers of righteousness themselves, *viz.* Noah, Abraham, Isaac, &c. Nor could it be the souls in purgatory, for besides, that there could be no such state before Christ had opened unto us the gate of heaven; to what end or purpose could he have preached to these, who must have obtained his full remission of all their sins in this life, who wanted no knowledge of righteousness, only some few satisfactory strokes to introduce them into paradise.

To conclude, though we take the words in the meaning which their own expositors put upon them, yet we cannot positively infer there is a purgatory from them, because at last they may more clearly be understood of that prison, wherein they imagine the righteous patriarchs themselves to have been detained; not that these could stand more in need of such preaching, who are expressed by God's Holy Spirit both to have known before, and to have rejoiced when they saw the day of Christ; as the Apostle fully explains to us, when he tells us how Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. And therefore we may, with the most reason, conclude this preaching was neither to the souls in the one place, nor to those in the other: and that from this text can be made out no such place as either of them is fancied to be.

Acts ii. 24, is also cited by some of them, the words are, "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death:" the sense of which, as they explain it, is this, that when Christ died, and descended beneath in the earth, he freed many from their pains and torments; not the damned, because they are past all deliverance; not the saints, because they endure no pains at all; therefore the souls in purgatory. But do the words intimate the least glimpse of any such releasement performed here by Christ? Do they not tell us expressly, that the person loosed, was the Lord Jesus himself, whom they had crucified, ver. 23. And moreover, that the pains from which he was loosed, were those of death, *ὡδίνας τοῦ θανάτου*, as the words are in the Greek, "by which it was impossible he should be holden." What is all this to purgatory, or the re-

leasement of souls from its fiery terrors? What a strange zeal is here for a purgatory, that cannot allow of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, without his leaving such a state behind him?

Again, Luke xxiii. 42, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" is applied to the same purpose, though the thief, when yet alive, made this request to our Saviour, yet this must necessarily argue an opinion of a remission after this life; and though our Lord answers him, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise;" yet this disproves not a purgatory, but must be looked upon as an extraordinary case that he escaped that prison, and an exemption to that general rule of a purgatory, which yet never was established in the Gospel.

Again, when the Apostle, Phil. ii. 10, tells us, that "at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth," he most convincingly informs us of a purgatory; by reason (as they interpret it) those under the earth, must necessarily be understood to be the souls tormented there. But what shifts are these, to advance an article of belief? Does not the Apostle here represent unto us the universal sovereignty of Christ? And bowing of knees here mentioned, denote that subjection, which not only every human creature, but even the inanimate, nay, the very devils, trembling and quaking, confess due to Christ? Why must those in the earth necessarily be the souls in purgatory? Are there not many men, women, and baptized infants, dead in the faith, whose bodies lie therein covered, besides many living animals and vegetables, which are frequently said in Scripture, to bow to, and glorify God in their kind, and according to the consistency of their natures? Is not this sufficiently explained to us in the fifth chapter of the Revelations, at the 13th verse: "Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever?" And sometimes we hear holy David in like manner, calling upon the sun and moon to praise the Lord with him. What creatures are those in the sea, which shall knowingly, and with a sense of veneration glorify Christ? May they not as reasonably fix a purgatory in the moon, or in the waters, as in the earth, from such texts as these are?

I shall conclude all with that in the xxist chapter of the

Revelation, at the 27th verse, "And there shall enter into it no unclean thing." From whence they infer, that the souls of the faithful that are spotted with sin, must be purged in the next life, before they enter into the kingdom of God, and so consequently a purgatory. We need here but repeat the whole verse for an answer; which runs thus, "And there shall enter into it no unclean thing; neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." For does it not clearly appear whom the holy Apostle meant by the unclean? Were they not the workers of lies and abominations, or such, whose impenitence had excluded them the Lamb's book of life? And will this agree with the state and condition of purgatory, which receives not any thing unclean, but those just persons who have obtained remission through his blood, who are stopped therein, not for any purification of sins retained, but to make payment and satisfaction for some debts forgotten to be discharged in this life? I hope those souls therein detained, are not such as are excluded the Lamb's book of life. Besides, though the heirs of salvation are yet unclean, still I hope faith, with the blood and merits of Christ, are much better refiners and purifiers than the fire of purgatory: when once our sins are purified and cleansed hereby, there is no fear we shall be bound by the way, or detained from the kingdom prepared for us; since the Holy Ghost has so fully assured all such, "If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house eternal in the heavens," 2 Cor. v. 1. So far is this doctrine of a purgatory from being clear or apparent in the Scriptures, that he must want common sense, that shall be perverted by such illogical deductions as are made in its behalf.

BOOK VII.

THE POISH METHODS FOR THE PARDON OF SIN,
GROUNDLESS; UPON THE HEAD OF PRAYER FOR THE
DEAD.

A DISCOURSE

OF

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

WE have now passed through the former part of our undertaking, and found but little reason to be concerned for those imaginary flames, which so much terrify those of the other communion. It only remains that we descend to the great argument that is most usually insisted upon by them, to prove at least the antiquity of their error, and that is from the undenied primitive custom of praying for the dead; and concerning which, I suppose, it may be sufficient to offer these two things.

First, To give a general account, what the practice of the Primitive Church was; from whence it will appear how little advantage the Church of Rome can derive to themselves by it.

Secondly, To answer those allegations, that are from hence brought by them in favour of that praying for the dead, which is now practised by them in their Church.

SECT. I.

Of the Practice of the Primitive Church, in praying for the Dead.

Now that I may give the clearer account of this, I must observe, 1st, That it is one thing to inquire whether we may not innocently pray for the dead; and another, whether we ought to do it. 2. That there is a great difference between praying for the dead in general, without defining what the particular intent of it is, and what advantages accrue to the dead thereby, and determining that we are to pray for the dead upon

such a certain account, as for instance, to deliver their souls out of purgatory, and that our prayers are effectual in order thereunto.

1. As to the former of these, we do not deny but that the Fathers did begin very early to pray for the dead; and some of them were so zealous for it too, that Epiphanius (as we shall see below) made it no small part of his accusation of Aërius, that he opposed the practice of it. But yet, we do not find that they pretended it was any part of a Christian's duty to do this: that the Gospel has any where required it of us, or recommended it to us: in short, they did it as something which seemed to them very pious and fitting; but they tied up no man's conscience with any decisions or anathemas about it.

2. For the benefit and advantage of it, in this they were yet less agreed than in the other: insomuch that when Aërius, whom I before mentioned, earnestly demanded what good came to the dead from our prayers? Epiphanius* chose rather to fly off to the custom of the Church, to the necessity of these prayers, to distinguish the condition of our blessed Lord from that of all other persons, and the like; than he would say expressly, how or wherein the dead were profited by them.

Many were the private opinions of those holy men, as to this matter.† Some who believed the millenary doctrine before mentioned, that the dead in Christ should revive within the compass of a thousand years, some sooner, others later, according as they had lived better or worser lives on earth; flattered themselves, that by their prayers they might hasten the felicity of their friends, and accordingly prayed,‡ *propter maturam resurrectionem*, for their speedy rising in Christ's kingdom.

3. Others supposed, that in the general conflagration of the world at the last day, all men should pass through the fire; that the better Christian any one had been, the less he would feel of the torment of it: and these prayed for the dead, that God would have mercy on them in that day, and not suffer

* Epiph. Hæres. 75. l. 3. n. 3. [vol. 1.] p. 908. A. Edit. [Colon.] Anno 1682. Ibid. n. 7. p. 911. C.

† Tertullian. lib. 3. contr. Marc. c. 24. p. 412. [Par. 1675.] Intra quam ætatem (sc. 1000 annorum) concluditur sanctorum resurrectio, pro meritis maturius vel tardius resurgentium.

‡ Tertull. de Monogam. c. 10. [Ibid.] p. 531. A. Ambros. de Obiit. Valent. T. 3. Te quæso, summe Deus, ut Charissimos Juvenes matura Resurrectione suscites, &c. [vol. 2. p. 1196. Par. 1690.]

them to be too much singed and burnt, not in the fire of purgatory, but in the general conflagration at the end of the world.

4. Some believed that the souls of just persons departed, went not straight to heaven, but were reserved in a certain place of sequester, where they earnestly expected, and continually wished for their absolute consummation with all the faithful in Christ's kingdom. And these prayed that God would give them ease, rest and refreshment, in the bosom of Abraham, that they might be comforted with the blessed company of the holy angels, and the vision of our Saviour Christ, till the so much wished-for day of judgment should come.

5. And lastly, not to mention any more ; others there were who thought that the sentence was not instantly pronounced as soon as men died ; or if it were, yet not so peremptorily, but that still, till the last day, the increase of glory might be added to the crown of righteousness which God hath designed for the just ; and some diminution made of the torments of the wicked. Now these prayed for the dead out of this hope, to render them either more happy or less miserable, to augment their glory, or to diminish their pains for ever.

And all these were the private opinions of particular men, no definitions of the faith of the Church in this matter :* many of the holy Fathers declaring no other cause of their praying for the dead, than only to shew their hopes of them, that they still lived, and therefore ought to have some communion maintained with them : or else to distinguish all, even the greatest saints, from our blessed Saviour, and shew his infinite prerogative above them, whilst they prayed for all the rest, to testify their infirmity, and only gave thanks for him, to manifest his glory.

Having given this particular account of the opinions of the primitive Fathers as to this point, and to some or other of which I shall shew, that all the passages produced out of them, in vindication of the doctrine of purgatory, may be applied ; it will be no difficult matter to shew how little all this can favour the present doctrine of the Roman Church in this matter.

1. The primitive Christians, it is true, prayed for the dead, but they never put it into any of their Creeds, as the Council of Trent has done now. Nay, Epiphanius† himself, in the close of his book, making a distinct recapitulation of what was the

* Epiphan. ib. sect. 7. p. 911.

† See Epiph. [Ibid.] tom. 2. l. 3. p. 1103. vol. 1. n. 21.

catholic faith, and what the constitution of the Church, places prayers for the dead among the latter;* and which were therefore used, because the custom of the Church gave authority thereunto.

2. The prayers that are made for the dead, by the Church of Rome, are expressly determined to this particular end,† to help and relieve the souls that are detained in purgatory. Whereas we do not find in the Primitive Church any thing at all defined as to the immediate design and benefit of them; and are only sure of this, that it was not to deliver the souls out of purgatory.

Now this in general is evident, in that we find them to have prayed for the best persons, for the holy apostles, martyrs, and confessors; for the blessed Virgin herself; for those whom they supposed at the same time to be in happiness, and whom the Papists themselves do not suppose to have ever touched at purgatory.

Thus we find in the Liturgies, said to be of the ancient Church, that their prayers were made for all these: the author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, having first described the party deceased,‡ “as replenished with divine joy, and now no more fearing any change for the worse; being publicly pronounced a happy man, and verily admitted into the society of the saints that have been from the beginning of the world;” then brings in the bishops praying for him;§ “that God would forgive him all the sins he had committed through human infirmity, and bring him into the light and land of the living, into the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: into the place where there is no more any pain, or sorrow, or sighing.”

In the Liturgy, said to be St. Basil’s, we find them thus praying for the dead; “Be mindful, O Lord, of them which are dead, and are departed out of this life, and of the orthodox bishops,|| which from Peter and James the Apostles, until this

* Ibid. n. 23. p. 1106.

† See Sess. 25. Conc. Trid. de Purg. [Labbe, ut supra, vol. 14. p. 894.] Symb. Pii IV. &c. [Ibid. p. 945.]

‡ De Ecclesiast. Hierarch. cap. 7. p. 347, 348, 350. A. B. C. 352. C. [vol. p. 405. 407. 409. 410. Antv. 1634.]

§ Πάντα μὲν ἀφεῖναι τὰ δι’ ἀνθρωπίνην ἀσθένειαν ἡμαρτημένα τῷ κεκοιμημένῳ, κατατάξαι δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν φωτὶ καὶ χώρῃ ζώντων, &c. p. 354. A. [Ibid. p. 411.]

|| See all these collected by Abp. Usher; Answer to a Challenge; Ch. of Prayers for the Dead, p. 185, &c. edit. 1625. Constitut. Apost. lib. 8. cap. 12. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 1. p. 482. Lut. Par. 1671.]

day, have clearly professed the right word of faith ; and particularly of Ignatius, Dionysius, Julius, and the rest of the saints of worthy memory. Be mindful, O Lord, of them also who have stood unto blood for religion, and by righteousness and holiness have fed thy holy flock."

In the Liturgy ascribed to the Apostles, thus they pray : "We offer unto thee for all the saints which have pleased thee from the beginning of the world ; patriarchs, prophets, just men, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, priests, deacons : " surely, I hope not to deliver all these out of purgatory.

In the Liturgy* of the Church of Egypt, ascribed to St. Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, and Cyril of Alexandria, it stands thus : " Be mindful, O Lord, of thy saints ; vouchsafe to remember all thy saints which have pleased thee from the beginning ; our holy Fathers the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, preachers, evangelists, and all the souls of the just which have died in the faith ; especially the holy, glorious, the evermore Virgin Mary, mother of God ; and St. John, the forerunner, the baptist and martyr ; St. Stephen, the first deacon and martyr ; St. Mark, the apostle, evangelist, and martyr," &c.

In the Liturgy of the Church of Constantinople, said to be St. Chrysostom's,† we find the very same : " We offer unto thee, this reasonable service for those who are at rest in the faith ; our forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, religious persons, and for every spirit perfected in the faith ; especially for our most holy, immaculate, and most blessed lady, the mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary."

I suppose, I need no other evidence than these public records of the very prayers of the Primitive Church, to shew that they did not pray for the dead, with any intent to the bringing them out of purgatory ; and by consequence, that there can be no manner of proof derived from what those holy men did, to justify what the Church of Rome now does. Were it at all needful to enforce this from the testimonies of private writers, I could easily run them out into a greater length than I am willing to do. St. Cyprian‡ prayed for Laurentinus and Ignatius, whom he in the same place acknowledges to have received

* Liturg. Ægyptiac. ex Arabic. Convers. Usher. ib. p. 186.

† Chrysost. Liturg. Edit. Goar. in Euchol. p. 78. Paris. 1647.

‡ Cypri. Epist. 39. p. 77. Ed. Oxon. [1682.]

palms and crowns for their sufferings. St. Ambrose* prayed for the religious emperors Valentinian and Gratian; for Theodosius;† for his brother Satyrus;‡ all which, at the same time, he declares he thought to be in happiness. Gregory Nazianzen did the like for his brother Cæsarius: and all these and many other proofs might at large be produced, were it needful to insist.

But this will more properly be done in the next point; wherein I am to examine the proofs offered by those of the Roman Church in favour of their own present practice, from the custom of the primitive Fathers which we have hitherto been speaking of.

SECT. II.

The allegations brought by those of the Church of Rome, to justify their practice of Praying for the Dead, examined; and their weakness demonstrated.

BEFORE I enter on this debate, it may not be amiss to premise what the true state of the point in controversy is; viz. not whether the primitive Fathers did not pray for the dead, after the manner we have now seen: for that we have already confessed they did: but whether they prayed for the dead upon the same principles that the Church of Rome does now, as supposing them to be in a state of torment, undergoing the temporal pains due to their sins, and in which therefore they were charitably to be relieved by the prayers and suffrages of the living. This is that which our adversaries are to prove to us; and I will now inquire what one of the latest of them, in his collections upon this point,§ has offered to this purpose.

And here, 1st, I cannot but observe his loose proposing of the point in debate,|| and the short account he gives of the case of Acrius in this matter, whom he sets at the head of his inquiry. “In the first century,” says he, “about the year of Christ 50, Acrius went out of the Church, and teaching many erroneous doctrines, related by St. Epiphanius, Hær. 75, endeavoured to draw numbers after him. His principal tenets were those wherein he condemned prayers for the dead,” &c.

* De Obitu Valentin. Imper. [ut supra.]

† Id. De Obitu Theodos. Imper. [ibid. p. 1208, &c.]

‡ Id. De Obitu fratris. [p. 1135.] Greg. Naz. in Funer. Cæsarii, Or. 10. [vol. 1. p. 168. Par. 1630.]

§ Nubes Testium of Acrius, p. 84.

|| Ibid.

And a little below, “Aerius* condemned praying for the dead : the Fathers practised it, and owned it as advantageous to the souls departed.”

That the Fathers practised praying for the dead, and that many of them believed it advantageous to them, we have before freely allowed : and that Aerius was to be condemned for what he did in opposition hereunto, we shall hereafter shew : in the mean time this gentleman ought to have known, that this is neither what they affirm, nor we deny : if he will state the question as he ought, it must be as we have before done it. “Aerius condemned praying for the dead, to deliver them out of purgatory ; the Fathers practised it, and owned it as advantageous in order to this end :” but this neither did Aerius condemn, nor the Fathers practise ; and therefore, the state of this question alone, had it been sincere, would have confuted his whole chapter.

To give then such an account of Aerius,† as may let us distinctly see what his error was, and how little chargeable we are with it, however it has pleased the writers of the Roman Church, not without some ignorance, as well as much uncharitableness, to impute it to us : I must first observe a small mistake in our author, as to the point of his chronology, whereby he is pleased to place Aerius‡ in the first century, about the year of Christ 50. I shall not need to say that there must be something of an error in this, because his own friend Natalis,§ out of whom he has transcribed every article of this chapter, will assure him, that he was contemporary with Epiphanius, and living at the time that that Father wrote. So that, unless we suppose him to have been almost 400 years old, we must conclude that this gentleman has placed him near 300 years before his time. But this only by the way : as for the error itself, with which Epiphanius|| charges him, it is this, “That he opposed the mentioning the names of the dead : asking, to what purpose they did it ? He that is alive prayeth, or offereth the sacrifice ; what shall this advantage the dead ? But if the dead are indeed profited thereby, then let no man from henceforth trouble himself to live well ;

* Nubes Testium, p. 84.

† Bell. de. Purg. l. 1. c. 2. D. p. 571. [vol. 2. p. 336. col. 1. Prag. 1721.] Petavius in Epiphan. [ut supra, vol. 2.] p. 328. n. 3. Natal. Alex. disp. 41. sec. 4. p. 346. part. 3. [Par. 1679.] ‡ Page 84.

§ Natalis Alex. Hist. 4. Sec. par. 1. p. 263. Paris. 1679.

|| Epiphan. Hær. 75. [ut supra, vol. 1.] p. 908. B.

only let him oblige his friends, or give money to persons to pray for him, that none of those inexpressible sins he hath committed, may be required of him." This was the case of Acrius : and had the Church indeed universally believed, as some of the Fathers did, that the judgment after death was suspended till the general resurrection, and that in the mean time, the sins of the dead might be expiated by the prayers of the living, he had but justly enough opposed so dangerous an error. But this was not the common opinion of the Church, nor her design in those prayers : which, as the author of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* tells us, were made only for good men : either for such as had committed no notorious faults, or had repented of them, and so died in an assured hope of God's favour and acceptance. And therefore Epiphanius,† in answer to this objection, gives another reason why they prayed for the dead ; viz. to declare their faith and hope concerning them ; to distinguish the infinite prerogative of our Saviour Christ above all, even the chiefest of his saints, by praying for these, but giving thanks only for him : and then for the benefit these prayers did the dead, he tells him, that though they were not of force to cut off all sins, which was the foundation of his objection, yet they were profitable to them, to implore the mercy of God for those who had been sinners, but repented ; and to obtain for them a recompense for all in the resurrection of the just.

The prayers therefore of the Church, for the rejecting of which Epiphanius here justly reproves Acrius, were not such as the Church of Rome now useth ; it being not imaginable, had the Church then known any thing of praying of souls out of purgatory, that either Acrius could have asked the question, "to what purpose are these prayers?" or Epiphanius, being asked, not presently have replied, "to deliver the souls departed from the flames of purgatory." The prayers that Acrius condemned were those which the primitive Fathers made, upon the account that from Epiphanius I have just now given : and which those of the Church of Rome do no less condemn than he did ; whilst they so often tell us, that if there be no purgatory, prayers for the dead must be unprofitable : so says Aquinas:‡ that the manner of praying for the apostles, mar-

* Dionys. Eccles. Hierarch. cap. 7. καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ τοῦτο κοινόν ἐστι τοῖς ἱεροῖς τε καὶ ἀνιέροις. p. 347. [ut supra, p. 405.]

† Epiphanius. ibid. n. 7. p. 911.

‡ Con. Gent. lib. 4. c. 91. [vol. 18. p. 495. col. 1. Venet. 1782.]

tyrs, &c. is by disuse deservedly abolished : so Mendoza :* nay, that to offer sacrifices for those that are in bliss, is plainly absurd and impious : so says Azorius ;† who in this, certainly outruns Acrius himself, who only pretended that it was unprofitable ; but never durst say it was impious and absurd.

It is therefore very improper in our collector of the Primitive Fathers, to insinuate as if we were Aerians upon the account of our not praying with them for the dead. Acrius rejected the prayers that the Primitive Church made, upon those principles that we have said, and which the Romanists themselves reject and condemn with him : we reject those prayers which the Church of Rome makes now for delivering souls out of purgatory. Had we lived in those times that Acrius did, we had readily complied with the practice of those holy men, upon such grounds as they used it. Had those holy Fathers lived now in the dregs of the Church, and seen the abuse of the Romanists in this matter, I make no doubt but they would have censured both the cause and the practice of the present praying for the dead, as false and unfitting ; I am sure Epiphanius‡ elsewhere gives us sufficient reason to believe that he would ; where, speaking concerning the state after death, he tells us, “ that in the age to come, after the death of a man, there is no advantage of fasting, no call to repentance, no demonstration of charity ;—there Lazarus does not go to the rich man, nor the rich man to Lazarus : neither Abraham sends the poor man to labour that he may grow rich, nor does the rich man obtain, though with prayers, entreating merciful Abraham. Then the garners are sealed, the time is ended, the combat finished, the lists are empty, and the crowns distributed. Those that have not yet encountered, have no more opportunity ; and they who have been overcome in the lists, are cast out. In short, all is perfectly ended, when once we are departed hence.”

And now having thus prepared the way to the following inquiry ; let us see whether his Fathers will prove any better advocates for their cause, than this loose and imperfect state of the question between us seems to promise. And,

1st, I must take notice, that the greatest part of those he has here cited, say only in general, that they were wont to

* Controvers. Theol. qu. 6. Schol. sect. 7.

† Azorius Instit. Moral. tom. 1. l. 8. c. 20. See these cited by Abp. Usher, Answer to a Chall. [ut supra,] p. 244, 245.

‡ Epiphani. Hær. 59. [ut supra,] p. 501. A. B. C.

pray for the dead, that God would forgive them their sins, and instate them in the light and land of the living; or something of the like kind. Now it is evident from what has been before observed, that all these argue nothing more than what we have already confessed to have been the practice of the Primitive Church, but give not the least authority to those prayers which are made in the Church of Rome, to deliver the souls departed out of purgatory.

So Dionys. Areopag. :* “The venerable prelate coming, prays over the dead body, he implores the Divine clemency, to pardon all the sins committed by the deceased party, through human frailty, and that he may be received into the state of bliss, and region of the living.”

This is indeed the sense of what the pretended Dionysius† says, though not his words: but then I must observe, 1st, “That this prayer is made over those, who having lived holy lives, are now come to the end of their combats, and therefore rest in joy, and in a certain hope, and are already received into those most holy seats, to which all those in time shall be promoted,‡ who are here endued with a divine perfection.” So that it must be an intolerable presumption to pretend that this prayer was designed to deliver the deceased out of a place of torments, nothing inferior to those of hell fire, such as we are told purgatory is.

2ndly, The author inquiring to what purpose these prayers were made, answers,§ “That the holy bishop, knowing the promise of God to those who had lived well, now prayed that those sins which by human frailty had been committed by the person deceased, being forgiven, the rewards promised to the just might be accomplished in him.” Here then is a plain account of the design of their praying, but no way favourable to the business of purgatory.

3rdly, Pachymeres in his Paraphrase, explaining what the meaning of those hymns and lessons was, which were read at the funeral of such a one for whom they thus prayed, says, “It is to signify those eternal mansions,|| to which the party deceased is gone, and to exhort the living to strive after the like holy end.” Now, surely, these eternal mansions of the

* Nubes. Test. p. 85. Natalis Alex. sec. 4. to. 3. [ut supra,] p. 392. Dionys. Hierarch. Eccl. p. 354. A. [ut supra, p. 411.]

† Dionys. ibid. p. 348. C. [Ibid. p. 406.]

‡ Ibid. p. 352. C. [Ibid. p. 409.]

§ Dionys. ibid. p. 356, 357. [Ibid. p. 412. 413.]

|| Dionys. Eccl. Hierarch. p. 366. D. [Ibid. p. 429.]

blessed, were not the Roman purgatory ; and it would have been but an uncomfortable exhortation, to have proposed to the living, that they should use their utmost endeavours, that they might come into this place of torments.

4thly, In his account of the prayers themselves, he says, “That the bishop knows from the holy Scriptures, that by the just judgment of God,* a blessed and divine life is prepared for the just, the Divine goodness mercifully overlooking the spots which by human frailty we contract, and from which no man is free. And therefore knowing this, he prays, that whatever spots of this kind, he by his frailty may have contracted, that God would mercifully overlook them, and give him his sacred reward.” And the same was the language of the ancient Liturgies of the Church, which we have before cited ; in which, having named the holy apostles, martyrs and confessors, which even the Romanists themselves will not send to purgatory ; they pray, that they may rest in the country of the living ; in the delights of paradise, in God’s kingdom, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; as St. James’s† Liturgy has it in the very words of Dionysius : “Make them‡ rest in the tabernacles of thy saints,” says St. Mark,§ “in the light of thy countenance,” says St. Basil, and St. Chrysostom ; “give them rest,” says St. Cyril.|| Now, if these prayers for this rest were to this end, that God would deliver them out of purgatory, and set them at ease, as the Church of Rome pretends, then certainly the holy Apostles and the blessed Virgin must have been in a very ill condition, who after 400 years (for so late, some of these prayers must be confessed to have been), were still esteemed by the Church to lie in those purgatory flames ; and it was great uncharitableness in St. Peter and his successors, that they would not all this while open the treasure of the Church, and by some powerful indulgence, set them at liberty. Conclude we therefore, that there is no manner of consequence in this argument, the primitive Fathers prayed “for the rest of the souls departed ;”

* Ibid. p. 370. [Ibid. p. 433.]

† Ἐκεῖ αὐτοὺς ἀνάπαυσον, ἐν χώρᾳ ζώντων, ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου, ἐν τῇ τρυφῇ τοῦ παραδείσου, ἐν τοῖς κόλποις Ἀβραάμ, Ἰσαάκ, καὶ Ἰακώβ. Liturg. Jacob. Bibl. Patr. [Lit. Sanct. Patr. p. 29. Par. 1560.]

‡ Τὰς ψυχὰς ἀνάπαυσον ταῖς τῶν ἁγίων σου σκηναῖς. Lit. Marc.

§ Ἀνάπαυσον αὐτοὺς ὑποῦ ἐπισκοπεῖ τὸ φῶς τοῦ προσώπου σου. Lit. Basil. et Chrys. [Liturg. Sanct. Patr. ut supra, p. 61. 99.]

|| Da illis requiem, Cyril. Hieros. [Alexandr.] Liturg. [p. 58. Aug. Vind. 1604.]

therefore they thought them in torment in a purgatory fire, suffering the temporal punishment due to their sins, and by these prayers believed they could deliver them from thence.

And yet is this the most that the greatest part of the testimonies which are offered to us, say; and by consequence are, as we see, wholly impertinent to the purpose of the Church of Rome: I shall need only name them, since the same answer I have given to this first, will, by application, serve for all the rest.

So Tertullian, whose words our collector* thus renders,† “We make oblations for the dead, and keep the anniversary of their birth.” He is speaking in that chapter of several customs of the Church, which tradition and long usage had established, but for which there was no authority of holy Scripture; and this he gives as one instance. But were these oblations to deliver them out of purgatory? I shall only desire him to consider the interpretation which their own editor gives of the *Natalitia*, which he renders Anniversaries, and then affirm it if he can. By the *Natalitia*, says he, “is meant the solemnities used to be kept in honour of the martyrs,‡ every year, on the day when by dying to the world they were born to heaven.” It seems then these solemnities Tertullian here speaks of, were for those who were already born to heaven, for the holy martyrs; and not, as is pretended, to deliver their souls out of purgatory.

Nor does Arnobius§ add any thing more: “What reason was there, that our Churches should be so outrageously thrown down, in which prayers were offered to our sovereign God, peace and mercy was implored for all, for magistrates, armies, kings, friends and enemies, whether alive or dead.” Here is mention of praying for the dead; but as for purgatory, οὐδὲ γρῦ.

What Eusebius|| speaks concerning the death of Constantine,

* Natalis Alex. diss. 41. tertii Sæc. [ut supra,] p. 394. Nubes Test. p. 85.

† Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis annua die facimus. De Corona, c. 3. p. 102. A. [Par. 1675.]

‡ Le Prieur. Annot. in loc. p. 102.

§ Natalis Alex. [ut supra,] p. 395. Nub. Test. 86. Cur immaniter conventicula dirui (meruerunt) in quibus summus oratur Deus, pax cunctis et venia postulatur, Magistratibus, Exercitibus, Regibus, Familiaribus, Inimicis, adhuc vitam degentibus, et resolutis corporum vinctione, lib. 4.

|| Natalis Alex. ibid. p. 398. Nub. Test. 88.

is no way more pertinent. He tells us that they offered up prayers to God for the soul of the emperor; but that these prayers were to deliver his soul from the temporal pains of purgatory, he says not one word.

I have already considered Epiphanius, and we find in his reprehension of Aerius much against them, but nothing in their favour: as for what Theodoret* relates of Theodosius the younger, that he prayed for his father and mother, begging that they might obtain pardon for all their sins of frailty; it still confirms that they did in those days pray for the dead, and for the forgiveness of their sins; but for the remission of any present temporal punishment, which they thought they were undergoing for them, this we do not find that they prayed for.

For St. Ambrose,† had his whole words been transcribed, we should have seen, at first view, that they were nothing to the purpose. He exhorts Faustinus, “not so much to bewail his sister, as to pray for her.” What, to deliver her soul out of purgatory? No surely, for in the words immediately foregoing, he tells him, “that being taken for a time from us,‡ she doth pass a better life there.” But this little oversight, ought not, in justice, to be imputed to our collector; who transcribes Natalis, and not the Fathers themselves; and could therefore give us no more than what he found in him.

The next from whom he supposes may be inferred the doctrine of praying souls out of purgatory, is St. Jerome:§ who, in the epistle mentioned to Pammachius some time after the death of his wife Paulina,|| particularly commends him that he had sold all his goods, and given them to the poor, and taken up the resolution of leading a monastic life. “Other husbands,” says he, “dress their wives’ tombs with violets, roses, and purple flowers, and by these services, ease their disturbed mind: but our friend Pammachius pays no other duty to the holy ashes and venerable bones, but by giving alms, cherishing them by this sweet odour, because he knows it is written, as water extinguishes the fire, so do alms blot out sin.” This is, in some measure, St. Jerome’s sense, but by no means

* Natal. Alex. [ibid.] p. 401. Nub. Test. 92.

† Natalis Alex. [ibid.] p. 402. Nub. Test. 93.

‡ Hæc ad tempus quidem erepta nobis meliorem illic Vitam exigit. Epist. 8. [ut supra, p. 944.]

§ Natal. Alex. [ibid.] p. 402. Nub. Test. 93.

|| Vid. Arg. Eras. p. 73. tom. 1. [Basil. 1516.]

suitable to the elegance of his expressions : but not to insist on that, was this charity to deliver her soul out of purgatory ? Nay, but St. Jerome* in the close of that very epistle says, “ that she was with her sister Blesilla already with the Lord : ” that they both enjoyed a sweet and pleasant sleep : and in the very words cited, there are so many expressions of her present quiet, as can never be reconciled to the purgatory torments. But this the translator left out : “ cherishing them (says he) by this sweet odour : ” St. Jerome’s words are these : “ With these figments and these odours he cherishes her dead ashes NOW AT REST : ” which plainly enough shews that he thought her in a state and place vastly different from the condition of souls in purgatory ; all that St. Jerome then meant by this, was only thus much, that this charity of Pammachius was most pleasing to Paulina, that her soul rejoiced in it, as in a fragrant and delightful odour ; and that hereby he should engage the mercy of God not for himself alone, but for his wife too, in whose name he did it, and to whose salvation it should therefore not a little conduce.

As to what is alleged of St. Austin’s praying for his mother Monica, † nothing certainly could have been more inauspicious to the consequence that is pretended to be drawn from it ; for besides that in all which he says, there is not one word of any temporal pains, which he desired she might be freed from ; he expressly declares, “ that he believed God had already done all that he desired : ” ‡ if therefore he desired to have her delivered out of purgatory, he believed God had already done it, and therefore the prayers he now made, could not be to obtain her freedom. But this circumstance our author cautiously omitted, though in the middle of what he set down ; and that the charge of such false dealing may not always lie upon Natalis, I must here free him from it ; this being the only passage in the whole chapter which our collector has not borrowed from him ; and must therefore now bear the blame himself, unless he has some other friend, that I do not at present know of, upon whom to lay the imputation.

I shall not need to give any answer more to the other pas-

* Fol. 76. Edit. Eras. tom. 1. [Ibid.]

† Natal. Alex. [ibid.] p. 402. Nubes Test. 94.

‡ Et credo jam feceris quod te rogo, sed voluntaria oris mei approba Domine. St. August. Confession. l. 9. c. 13. tom. 1. p. 61. B. [Lugd. 1664.]

sage or two from the same Father ; in none of which is there the least mention of any purgatory pains, or that the prayers were made for their deliverance from them.

And hitherto then we have considered such testimonies as cannot, with any show of reason, be pretended to make anything for the custom of praying for the dead, now used in the Church of Rome. But now,

2ndly, Some others there are that may seem more immediately to their purpose ; in which they expressly desire rest, comfort, and refreshment for the dead. I have already answered in great measure this argument, by shewing that these things they prayed for, even for the apostles and martyrs, and the blessed Virgin herself ; and therefore that these expressions cannot be said to signify, that the persons for whom they prayed, were either in purgatory, or any other place of torments. But I will now more expressly remove this difficulty, and to that end I must repeat what I have before observed, that many among the ancient Fathers supposed, that the souls departed do not go straight to heaven, but are kept in a place of sequester, where they earnestly desire the accomplishment of the number of Christ's saints, that they may be consummated with them in glory. Now with reference to this opinion it was, that they prayed to God to give them rest : so Tertullian, and St. Ambrose, alleged by our collector ;* to grant them repose, a quiet sleep : so St. Cyprian, *i. e.* as Tertullian himself explains it,† “ that they might have comfort in the bosom of Abraham, till the time of the resurrection shall come.”

If it shall be objected against this, that to pray for their rest implies as if they were not now in ease, and so reduce us to a necessity of confessing either a purgatory, or some other the like place of punishment : I answer, 1st, If this be so, then the blessed Virgin, the apostles, martyrs, and confessor were all at this time in purgatory, above 300 years after their death ; for thus we see they prayed in the Primitive Church by name for them, which yet the Church of Rome dares not say. But, 2ndly, In the continuance of their prayers for the dead, they used the same supplications that they did at their first departure ; and therefore pray for their rest and repose,

* Nub. Test. vid. supr.

† Lib. de An. c. 35. [p. 291. Par. 1695.] Id. lib. 4. contr. Marc. c. 34. [Ibid. p. 450.]

as if they were but now just about to enter into it; and this account Cardinal Bellarmine himself gives us of it.* To which let me add, 3rdly, that the ancient Fathers thought, that in this place of refreshment, there were divers degrees of it; and therefore they prayed that God would give them rest, not as if they were now totally destitute of it, but as desiring it might be increased to them in a yet higher degree: or else, 4thly, as Tertullian's words seem to imply, they desired hereby their rest, *i. e.* the continuance of that rest they now enjoyed, to the day of judgment.

Nor is it any prejudice to this, that the dead were now out of a capacity of having their state ever altered, and therefore that it was in vain to pray for that happiness which they were already secure of, since, as Bellarmine himself confesses,† the ancients thought it no way improper to pray for those things which they knew God was resolved to give: and we see our blessed Saviour, in his own short prayer, has commanded us to pray that God's kingdom may come, which, whether we pray or no, will in its due time most infallibly be accomplished.

Whether these reasons may, any or all of them, appear to be a sufficient vindication of such kind of prayers, I cannot tell: but this is certain, that the primitive Christians did pray for the rest of those whom they esteemed already in happiness, and by consequence that these prayers do not argue a state of torments, from whence the dead were to be delivered by them. And because it may be of great moment to be well assured of this, I will subjoin an undeniable instance of it in one of the very particulars offered by our Collector, but with what sincerity I shall leave the reader to judge, in favour of purgatory.

St. Ambrose, in his oration on the death of Theodosius, thus prays for him: "Give perfect rest to thy servant Theodosius, that rest which thou hast prepared for thy saints. Let his soul ascend thither from whence it had its origin; where it may be out of the power of death, where it may know that death is not an end of nature, but of sin. I loved him, and therefore I pursue him to the region of the living, nor will I leave him, till by my tears and prayers, I bring him whither his merits call him, into the holy mount of our Lord, where there is life without end."

* Lib. 2. de Purg. cap. 5. p. 644. C. [ut supra, p. 332.]

† Lib. 2. de Purg. cap. 5. *ibid.* [p. 334.]

Thus our collector tells us St. Ambrose prayed for Theodosius : but did this holy bishop think him as yet in purgatory, and that by his prayers he should set him at rest from the torments of it ? Let us judge by what goes before in the same oration :* “ Theodosius, of honourable memory, being freed from doubtful fight, doth now enjoy everlasting light, and continual tranquillity ; and for the things which he did in this body, he rejoiceth in the fruits of God’s reward ; because he loved the Lord his God, he hath merited the society of the saints.” And again, in the same oration : “ He hath not laid down, but changed his kingdom, being taken by the right of his piety into the tabernacles of Christ, into the heavenly Jerusalem.”† Now surely the tabernacles of Christ, the Jerusalem that is above, are no characters of purgatory ; and yet here St. Ambrose thought Theodosius, at the same time that he prayed for him. But St. Ambrose is yet more express : “ Theodosius‡ therefore (says he) remains in light, and glorieth in the company of the saints.” Let the reader now judge, whether the prayers of this holy man for the rest of Theodosius, be any precedent for those prayers that are made for the rest of souls, by the Church of Rome.

3. There is yet one witness to be considered, and upon which our Collector insists more largely than ordinary, and that is St. Chrysostom :§ who in the places cited out of him, speaks indeed of certain benefits which came to the dead by our prayers ; and thereupon exhorts all persons to perform this office to them. I have before mentioned an opinion of some Fathers, that even the damned in hell might be advantaged by the prayers of the living ; and if not be freed from, yet be at least alleviated in their torments. And in this excessive charity, St. Chrysostom was one of the forwardest ; as is evident in the very Homilies|| cited by this Collector, were I at liberty to insist on a thing so well known. We are not

* Absolutus igitur dubio certamine, fruitur nunc Augustæ memoriæ Theodosius luce perpetua, tranquillitate diuturna, et pro iis quæ in hoc gessit corpore, munerationis Divinæ fructibus gloriatur. Ergo quia dilexit Augustæ memoriæ Theodosius Dominum Deum suum, meruit sanctorum consortia. [ut supra, vol. 2. p. 1206.]

† Regnum non deposuit sed mutavit; in tabernacula Christi jure pietatis ascitus, in illam Hierusalem supernam. [Ibid. p. 1197.]

‡ Manet ergo in lumine Theodosius, et sanctorum cætibus gloriatur. [Ibid. 1208.]

§ Nub. Test. p. 88, 89, &c.

|| Hom. 21. in Act. tom. 3. in N. T. p. 202, 203. [Par. 1636.] Hom. 3. in Ep. Phil. to. 6. in N. T. [ibid.] p. 32, 33.

therefore to wonder, if we find this Father so earnestly pressing this charity of praying for the dead, which he thought of so great a force, as even to relieve the greatest sinners. If this be either the belief or practice of the Roman Church, we shall not deny them a pattern in this holy Father : but if this be what they neither believe nor allow of, how impertinent must it be to produce his praying for the dead, on such principles as they condemn, to be a witness of the antiquity of their praying for the dead to deliver them out of purgatory, which he knew nothing at all of, nor did at all intend by his prayers.

4. As for what is finally added, concerning the Greek Church, it is confessed that they do pray for the dead upon the same grounds, and after the same manner that the ancient Church did ; but that they pray for them as the Romanists would now insinuate, this is false, as we have before shewn ; nor do the testimonies produced at all convince us of it.

And this may suffice to have been said to the several proofs that are offered by those of the Roman communion in favour of this error, concerning prayers for the dead ; for as for Isidore Hispalensis, he is beyond the period I have fixed to my reflections ; and for St. Perpetua's dream, which the Mis-representer, from Natalis too, heretofore insisted upon, I may reasonably presume, by our Collector's omission of it, that he thought it sufficiently answered by the learned author that first undertook the examination of his pretences against us.

CLOSE.

AND now, after so particular examination of all these things, there is but one objection more remaining, that I can foresee may possibly be made against us, on this occasion : for be it that we have reason to throw off the Romish error of purgatory, and by consequence those prayers for the dead which are made in that Church to deliver the souls from thence ; yet since we cannot deny but that the primitive Christians did pray for the dead for many other ends, and which we do not presume to condemn them for, wherefore at least do we not continue the ancient practice, and pray for them as those holy men of old did ?

This perhaps may be a scruple that some may raise, and having answered it, I shall conclude. And,

1st, If he be one of the Roman communion that makes this objection, he may please to tell us, wherefore it is, that they of his own Church do not do this? or why he should require us to follow the ancient practice of the Church, in those things which themselves do not think sufficient to oblige them to a conformity? They may call us Aerians, or what else they please upon this account; but if to follow the error of Aerius in this be to become properly Aerians, we have before seen that they do so; nay, they outstrip him in it; whilst that sort of praying for the dead, which the ancients used, he thought only needless and irrational;* but there are amongst them those who doubt not to call it impious and absurd.

I have before shewn what the grounds were, on which those holy men prayed for the dead: now there is not one of these, which is not at this day disclaimed by the Church of Rome, no less than by us, and especially that which was the chiefest foundation of all, *viz.* the opinion of the state of the soul out of heaven during its separation, they have in the Council of Florence flatly condemned. Now if it be then no crime in them, to reject the opinions of those primitive Christians, on which this practice was founded, nay, to censure the very practice itself upon any other account but that which they now assert, and which the ancient Fathers, as we have seen, never knew; how comes it to be more unlawful in us to do this, than it is in them? or why may not we as well leave off praying for the dead as the ancient Church did, as they themselves not only leave it off, but even censure it to have been impious and absurd, which we never presumed to do? But,

2ndly, If the person who makes this objection, be of some other communion, I have several reflections to offer in our justification in this matter.

1st, Let his reverence for antiquity be never so great, yet he will not, I am sure, say either that those holy men were infallible in every thing they did, or that we ought to receive at all adventures, whatever can be proved to have descended from them. We do indeed confess, that this custom of praying for the dead, was one of the most early practices of the Church.

But then we have seen what it was that introduced it: and their grounds are many of them such as are now generally disclaimed by almost all Christians; such as that of Christ's

* See above.

millenary kingdom ; of the passing of all men through the purgatory fire at the end of the world ; of the souls of the just being in a place of sequester out of heaven till the last day, and the like : the rest so inconsiderable, as that we cannot by any means think them sufficient to warrant so dangerous a practice. For what is it to engage us to this, that the ancients thought hereby to distinguish the best of men from our Saviour Christ ? To testify their hopes of a future resurrection ? To maintain a kind of fellowship and communion with them ? There are other ways enough to do all this, without engaging in such a piety, as the holy Scripture is not so much as pretended to countenance ; the most that ever the holy Fathers offered for it, being the custom of the Church ; and Tertullian expressly places it among those things which are nowhere written. How far such an authority might then have obliged us to compliance with the practice of the Church, had we lived in those primitive times, it is not necessary to inquire ; but since neither the holy Scripture requires it, nor does the custom of the Church now exact it of us, nor do we acknowledge those opinions on which it was heretofore used, nor can we see any benefit that we are able to do the dead by them ; it is but reasonable to omit that which might justly give offence to some, but cannot possibly bring advantage to any.

But, 2ndly, We have yet a more particular reason, why it is by no means fitting at this time, thus to pray for the dead ; and that is, to prevent that danger which the present practice of the Church of Rome would be apt to expose men to, should we do it. To pray for the souls departed, as that Church does, neither did the primitive Fathers ever allow, and we have sufficiently shewn how dangerously erroneous it is to do so. It is therefore by no means convenient to continue a practice whereby it might be very easy to lead men into such gross mistakes ; and however some might still be able to make the distinction, and see a great difference in the design and intention of the same kind of praying ; yet the ill use that is made, even of what those holy Fathers did, sufficiently shews us how apt men are to confound those things together, that have so nigh a relation as to the practice, and the act being the same, to lead them to believe that the principle is so too.

In short, 3rdly, We cannot imagine, if there were indeed any such great piety in this practice, as to deserve our apology for the omission of it, how it comes to pass, that neither precept nor example of any such thing, is to be found in the holy

Scriptures : and to those who make that the rule of their religion, we do not see that any more need be said than this, that we find nothing there to authorize such a devotion, and that therefore we cannot think it fitting to make it a part of the Church's service.

I shall close up all with the words of our Church in her Homily upon this subject :* “ Let these and such other considerations be sufficient to take away the gross error of purgatory out of our heads ; neither let us dream any more that the souls of the dead are any thing at all holpen by our prayers ; but as the Scripture teacheth us, let us think that the soul of man passing out of the body, goeth straightways either to heaven, or else to hell ; whereof the one needeth no prayer, the other is without redemption. The only purgatory wherein we must trust to be saved, is the death and blood of Christ, which if we apprehend with a true and steadfast faith, it purgeth and cleanseth us from all our sins, even as well as if he were now hanging upon the cross. ‘ The blood of Christ,’ saith St. John,† ‘ hath cleansed us from all sin.’ ‘ The blood of Christ,’ saith St. Paul, ‘ hath purged our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God.’ Also in another place, he saith,‡ ‘ We be sanctified and made holy by the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ done once for all.’ Yea, he addeth more, saying, ‘ With the one oblation of his blessed body and precious blood, he hath made perfect for ever and ever, all them that are sanctified.’ This then is that purgatory, wherein all Christian men put their whole trust and confidence ; nothing doubting, but if they truly repent them of their sins, and die in perfect faith, that then they shall forthwith pass from death to life. If this kind of purgation will not serve them, let them never hope to be released by other men's prayers, though they should continue therein unto the world's end. He that cannot be saved by faith in Christ's blood, how shall he look to be delivered by man's intercessions ? Hath God more respect to man on earth, than he hath to Christ in heaven ? ‘ If any man sin,’ saith St. John, ‘ we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.’§ But we must take heed that we call upon this Advocate, while we have space given us in this life, lest when we are once dead, there be no

* Third part of Sermon concerning Prayer, p. 212. Ed. Ox. 1683.

† 1 John i. 7. Heb. ix. 14. ‡ Heb. x. 10. § 1 John ii. 1, 2.

hope of salvation left unto us. For as every man sleepeth with his own cause, so every man shall rise again with his own cause. And look in what state he dieth, in the same state he shall also be judged, whether it be to salvation or damnation.

“Let us not therefore dream either of purgatory, or of prayer for the souls of them that be dead; but let us earnestly and diligently pray for them which are expressly commanded in holy Scripture, namely for kings and rulers, for ministers of God’s holy word and sacraments, for the saints of this world, otherwise called the faithful; to be short, for all men living, be they never so great enemies to God and his people, as Jews, Turks, Pagans, infidels, heretics. Then shall we truly fulfil the commandment of God in that behalf, and plainly declare ourselves to be the true children of our heavenly Father, who suffereth the sun to shine upon the good and bad, and the rain to fall upon the just and unjust.

“For which, and all other benefits, most abundantly bestowed upon mankind from the beginning, let us give him hearty thanks, as we are most bound, and praise his name for ever and ever. Amen.”

AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
SOME GENERAL DISCOURSES AGAINST POPERY.

A PRESERVATIVE AGAINST POPERY :
BEING SOME PLAIN DIRECTIONS TO UNLEARNED PROTESTANTS,
HOW TO DISPUTE WITH ROMISH PRIESTS.

PART I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

WHILE so many learned pens are employed to such excellent purpose, in answering the writings, and confuting the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, I cannot but think it a very useful work, to give some plain directions to those who are unlearned, who have neither time to read, nor money to buy, nor abilities to understand more learned controversies. Our divines indeed have taken great care to write short tracts, with great plainness and perspicuity, and with as little unnecessary show of learning as may be, to fit them the better for unlearned readers ; and they have had, by the blessing of God, wonderful success ; Popery was never so generally understood, as it is at this day ; the meanest tradesmen can now dispute against Popery with sufficient skill and judgment, and need not be beholden to the prejudices of education to secure them : and therefore my business shall not be at present, downright to state any one controversy between us and the Church of Rome, but to direct our people how to secure themselves against the attacks of our Roman adversaries, to check their conferring and disputing humour, or to baffle them. I shall reduce all into as plain a method and as short a compass as I can, and shew,

First, How to stop them at the beginning of their dispute.

Secondly, Give some rules about the topics, from which they dispute, such as Reason, Scripture, and the Authority of the ancient Fathers and writers of the Church.

Thirdly, How to answer some of their most popular pretences, such as the uncertainty of the Protestant religion, the misrepresentations of Popery, &c.

Fourthly, To give some short directions as to particular controversies.

CHAP. I.

How Protestants may prevent disputing with Papists.

Now I do not by this mean that they should always avoid their company, and run away from them wherever they meet them, which is very ill manners; though it is not advisable neither to court such acquaintance, or to make them our intimates, when neither the obligations of nature, nor other civil or political reasons make it necessary; for conversation many times prevails more than arguments can do, and will as soon corrupt men's faith, as manners.

Nor do I mean that Protestants should obstinately refuse to discourse with Papists when they meet them; to hear what they have to say for themselves, and to give a reason for their own faith; this is agreeable to Protestant principles, to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good; and yet this ought to be done with great prudence and caution too; for there are a sort of perverse disputers, who are to be avoided, according to the Apostolic precept, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself," 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5.

Men of weak judgments, and who are not skilled in the laws of disputation, may easily be imposed on by cunning sophisters, and such as lie in wait to deceive; the Church of Rome is very sensible of this, and therefore will not suffer her people to dispute their religion, or to read heretical books, nay,

not so much as to look into the Bible itself; but though we allow all this to our people, as that which God not only allows, but requires, and which all considering men will allow themselves, whoever forbids it; yet we do not allow them to be perpetual seekers, to be always doubtful of their religion, to be like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. And therefore the liberty of judging and inquiring, which we allow, is only that they may understand the true reasons of their faith, and be well grounded in it, which men may be, who are not able to answer every cavilling objection; but it is an abuse of this liberty, when men have itching ears, and hearken after all novelties of opinions, and grow wanton and sceptical disputers; and therefore it is very consistent with that liberty which Protestants allow, to advise Christians to be very careful, how they hearken to such as preach any new doctrine which they have not been taught, that the weak in faith and knowledge should not venture upon doubtful disputations; that they should not be hasty to question what they have believed, nor to give heed to new doctrines; that they should not rely on their own understanding in these matters, but when they meet with any difficulties, should consult their spiritual guides, not to be finally determined by their authority, as the Church of Rome requires, but to hear their reasons, and what answers they can give to such difficulties as they themselves cannot answer: with such cautions as these, we dare venture our people to hear and read, and inquire, as much as they please, and have not found yet, that our Roman adversaries have been able to make any great impression upon such honest and prudent inquirers. But that which I intend at present, is of another nature, to teach our people a way to make these men sick of disputing themselves, to make them leave off those impertinent and noisy squabbles, with which they disturb all company they come into: and this is no such mighty secret neither, as may be expected, but it is very plain and obvious at the first proposal.

For when you are assaulted by such troublesome disputers, only ask them, whether they will allow you to judge for yourselves in matters of religion; if they will not, why do they trouble you with disputing? for the end of disputing, is to convince, and you cannot be convinced, unless you may judge too: would they dispute with a stone, that can neither hear, nor understand? Or would they make a speech to convince a horse, that he is out of his way, and must take another road,

if he would return home? And do they not talk to as little purpose, and spend their breath as vain upon a man, who can hear indeed, and understand somewhat, but must not follow his own understanding? If they say, that you must judge for yourselves, ask them, whether this be the doctrine of their Church, that private men may judge for themselves? Whether this do not resolve our faith into a private spirit, which they say is the Protestant heresy, and the foundation of Protestant uncertainty? If they once open this gap to heretics into the Church, there is great danger, that more will run out at it, than will come in; and it is well if the Church itself stays behind; for what becomes of the Church of Rome, if all their glorious cant of the infallibility of Church, and Popes, and General Councils, be at last resolved into a private spirit! While these men go about to dispute heretics into their Church, they unavoidably give up the cause of the Church, and of infallibility, which is the way to dispute a great many good Catholics out of it, who are kept there only by the power of a blind and implicit faith. Here then let our Protestant fix his foot, and not stir an inch, till they disown infallibility, and confess that every man can, and must judge for himself in matters of religion, according to the proofs that are offered to him. For will a wise man dispute with one, who, he knows, banters him all the while? who appeals to his private judgment (as all men do, who dispute with one another), and at the same time cries down this private spirit as the cause of schisms, and heresies, and blasphemies, and every thing that is evil: no man of any spirit, but will scorn to dispute with one, who intends only to put a trick on him, and to outwit him if he can; and in truth, it is no more to endeavour to dispute a man into Popery, when the fundamental principle of Popery is, that we must not reason and dispute, but believe; that we must take our faith upon the authority of the Church, without asking any questions about it. There are two or three things which may be answered to this.

1. That though disputing be not a proper way for Papists to take, yet it is the only way that can be taken with Protestants, who are all for disputing, and will believe nothing without a reason, and therefore Protestants ought not to blame Papists for disputing, unless they would be good Catholics without it. Now in answer to this, I have something to say to Papists, and something to Protestants.

1. As for the Papists, what necessity soever they be in of disputing, I desire to know with what face they can reproach

Protestants with adhering to their own private judgments, when they themselves are such zealous disputants, which is an appeal to every private man's judgment : if ever they make any converts, they must be beholden to men's private judgments for it ; for I think men cannot change their opinions without exercising a private judgment about it ; and I suppose when they dispute with men to make them Papists, they intend to convert them by their own private judgments. Now what difference is there between men's using their private judgments to turn Papists, or to turn Protestants ? One indeed may be false, and the other true ; but private judgment is private judgment still : and if it be so great a fault for men to use their own private judgments, it is as great a fault in a Papist, as in a Protestant. So that at least, as to converts, the Church of Rome has no advantage in this particular over Protestant Churches : some by the exercise of their own reason and judgment, go over to the Church of Rome, and some to the Church of England ; some are disputed into Popery, and some into Protestantism : and therefore, for the sake of their beloved converts, and their beloved disputations, they ought to be more favourable to a private spirit : the truth is, by disputing with heretics, they give up their cause, and confess, that in all disputes of religion, there lies an appeal to every man's private judgment and conscience ; and should they lose this point by their disputing, all the converts they make cannot recompense such a loss.

Secondly, As for Protestants, though they have no other way to satisfy themselves, or to convince others, but by reason and discourse, yet this is no reason why they should dispute with those men who disown the judgment of reason, as a private spirit. For why should I dispute with any man who uses such arguments to convince me, as he himself does not think a sufficient reason of faith ? Ask then one of these disputers, who alleges Scripture, reason, and antiquity, to prove any doctrines of the Romish faith, Do you, Sir, believe transubstantiation, the worship of images, the invocation of saints, purgatory, mass for the dead, upon the bare authority of these Scriptures and Fathers you have produced for them ? If these doctrines were not defined by the Church, should you think these arguments sufficient to prove them ? or, could you suppose the Church had defined the contrary, should you think the arguments good still ? In short, can any reason, any authority of Scripture, or Fathers, be any foundation for a Divine faith, but only the authority of the Church ? He that

says they can, is no Papist ? and he that says they cannot, confesses, that he uses such arguments, as he himself does not build his faith upon : if you will believe them, you may ; but though you do, you are no sound believer, without resolving your faith solely into the authority of the Church. And, I think, he must love disputing well, who will dispute with such men as these ; and those must have a good degree of assurance, who will be troublesome with their disputes, after such a discovery. The end of disputing, I suppose, is either to convince, or to be convinced : but should you answer and baffle all such a man's arguments, if he be modest, it may be he may blush a little, but is not to be moved ; for his faith, after all, is not built upon these arguments, but upon Church authority : and it is to no purpose for you to suffer yourself to be convinced by these arguments, for it will not make you a good Catholic, without resolving your faith wholly into the authority of the Church. It is certainly a very surprising thing, for a Protestant to be disputed into Popery ; for as soon as he is converted, he must renounce the very means of his conversion : he must use his own judgment to turn Papist, and as soon as he is turned, he must renounce his own judgment, and confess it to be of no authority. Now though, it may be, such a private judgment as leads a man to Popery, may as well deserve to be renounced, as any ; yet it is an odd kind of contradiction, to renounce our own private reason and judgment, and yet to own our conversion ; methinks such men should renounce their conversion too at the same time they renounce their reason : for if their conversion be good, it is a sign their judgment was so ; but if their judgment be not fit to be trusted, methinks this should make them question their conversion : and therefore they should either maintain the reputation of their judgment and conversion together, and then they cannot be good Catholics, while they adhere to their own judgment, or they should renounce them both together : nay, they must not only renounce their own judgments, as soon as they are converted, but they must renounce the authority and validity of those very arguments whereby they are converted, whether from Scripture, reason, or Fathers ; they must confess, that these arguments are not a sufficient foundation for a Divine faith without the authority of the Church ; for it is a dangerous thing to allow any authority to Scripture or Fathers, without the Church, for that may make men heretics ; and yet, I suppose, when

heretics are converted by these arguments, it must be the force of the arguments, and not the authority of the Church, which converts them, unless they believed the authority of the Church before they were converted, and that was a little too early for it. Now, methinks, when Protestants turn Papists, as they pretend, from the conviction of their own reason and judgment, and as soon as they are converted are taught that there is no relying upon their own judgment, and that the reasons whereby they were converted, are not good in themselves, without Church authority; if it were possible for them ever to use their reason more, after such a change, it would certainly make them disown their conversion; which, it seems, was the effect of a very fallible judgment, and very uncertain and inauthentic reasons.

2. There is another pretence for these disputes, which may seem to answer this difficulty, that the intention of these disputes, is only to lead you to the infallible Church, and set you upon a rock; and then it is very natural to renounce your own judgment, when you have an infallible guide. Our own judgment then must bring us to the infallible guide, and when we have found him, we have no farther use for our own judgment. I answer,

1. Should we grant this, it puts an end to all the particular disputes of religion between us and the Church of Rome. We may dispute on about an infallible judge, but they cannot, with any sense, dispute with us about the particular articles of faith, such as transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, the worship of images, and the like; for these are to be learned only from the Church, and cannot be proved by Scripture or Fathers, without the authority of the Church. And if they would confess this, they would save us and themselves a great deal of trouble: for why should they be at the trouble of writing such arguments, or we to answer them, when they themselves confess, that the arguments are not good, unless they be confirmed by the Church's authority? I confess, I have often wondered to see such volumes of controversies written by the Roman divines, for I could never imagine to what end they are writ. Is not their faith wholly resolved into the authority of the Church? What need reasons and arguments then, which cannot work faith in us? Either these arguments are sufficient to confirm the articles of their faith, without the authority of the Church, or they are not: if they are, then there is no need of infallibility, since all the articles

of faith are confirmed by such reasons, as are a sufficient foundation for faith without it : and thus they give up all their arguments for an infallible judge, from the necessity of such a judge. If they be not, of what use are they ? Does the decision of the Church need to be confirmed by such arguments ? If they are not good arguments without the authority of the Church, they can no more give authority to the Church, than an infallible Church can want any authority but its own. Are they to convince heretics ? But how if heretics should confute them ? If they be not in themselves good arguments, they may be confuted ; and they know, by sad experience, that there are heretics, as they call them, who have wit and learning enough to confute what is to be confuted ; and if they fall into such hands (which has been their hard fate of late), they are sure to be confuted : and I doubt then they had better have let them alone ; for the Catholic cause may suffer much in the opinion of the world, when all their arguments are confuted. All then that they can design by such arguments, is to impose upon the weak and ignorant, when learned men are out of the way, which is no very commendable design ; and that design will be spoiled too, if unlearned men do but learn to ask them the question, whether they build their faith upon such arguments ? For then they must either quit the authority of their Church, or the strength of their arguments : the first reduces them to Protestant uncertainty, for then they have no other foundation for their faith than Protestants have ; which resolves itself into the reasons and arguments of faith : the second puts an end to disputing about these matters ; for no man needs answer any arguments, which the disputant himself acknowledges not to be good.

2. There is nothing then left for disputation, and the exercise of our private reason and judgment, but the inquiry after an infallible judge. And here also, before you dispute, it will be necessary to ask them, whether the belief of an infallible judge must be resolved into every man's private judgment ? Whether it be not necessary to believe this with a Divine faith ? And whether there can be any Divine faith without an infallible judge ? Certainly, if ever it be necessary to have an infallible faith, it is so to be infallibly assured of an infallible judge, because this is the foundation of all the rest : for though the judge be infallible, if I be not infallibly assured of this, I can never arrive to infallibility in anything ; for I cannot be more certain, that his determinations are infallible, than I am

that he himself is infallible ; and if I have but a moral assurance of this, I can be but morally assured of the rest ; for the building cannot be more firm than the foundation is : and thus there is an end to all the Roman pretences to infallibility. Now if we must believe the infallibility of the Church, or Pope of Rome, with an infallible faith, there is an end of disputing ; for no reasons or arguments, not the authority of the Scripture itself, without an infallible judge, can beget an infallible faith, according to the Roman doctors : for this reason they charge the Protestant faith with uncertainty, and will not allow it to be a Divine, but human faith, though it is built upon the firmest reasons, the best authority, and the most express Scripture that can be had for any thing ; but because we do not pretend to rely on the authority of a living infallible judge, therefore, forsooth, our faith is uncertain, human, and fallible : and this, they say, makes an infallible judge necessary, because without him we have no infallible certainty of anything.

Now if nothing but an infallible judge can be the foundation of an infallible faith, then it is to no purpose to dispute about such a judge ; for disputing is nothing else but weighing reason against reason, and argument against argument, or Scripture against the pretence of Scripture ; but whoever gets the better of it this way, no reasons, or arguments, or Scripture proofs can beget an infallible certainty, which is necessary in this case ; and therefore this is all lost labour, and they do but put a trick upon you, when they pretend to dispute you into the belief of an infallible judge ; for they themselves know, and must confess, if you ask them, that the best and most convincing arguments cannot give us an infallible assurance of this matter ; and yet unless we are infallibly assured of an infallible judge, it is all to no purpose.

3. I can think but of one thing more, that can be said in this cause, *viz.* that it is manifestly unreasonable not to grant to the Church of Rome that liberty which all men and Churches challenge, to dispute for themselves, and against their adversaries : for when two men or two Churches differ in matters of faith, there is no other way to end the controversy, but by disputing it out ; whereas this discourse will not allow them to dispute, nor any Protestants to dispute with them.

In answer to this, I grant, that the charge is in a great measure true, and shews the absurdity of that Church and religion, but does not disprove the reasonableness of this

method. If men will embrace such a religion as will not admit of disputing, it is their own, and their religion's fault, not the fault of those men who will not dispute with them. Now a religion which leaves no room for the exercise of reason and private judgment, leaves no place for disputes neither; for how shall men dispute, who must not use their own reason and judgment? They ought not to dispute themselves, if they be true to their own principles; and no man ought to dispute with them, who will not be laughed at by them, and by all the world: for to dispute without reason, is a new way of disputing (though it is the only thing that can justify the Romanists, and our late disputants have been very careful to observe it); and to dispute with reason, is to use our private reason in religion, which is Protestant heresy. Infallible men ought not to dispute, for that is to quit their infallibility; and fallible men are very unwise to dispute with them, because no good can come of it: for reason can never confute their infallible adversaries, nor make themselves infallible believers.

But for the better understanding of this, I have two things to say. 1. That Papists may dispute against Protestant heresies, as they call them, but cannot dispute for their own religion. 2. Protestants may dispute against Popish doctrines, and to vindicate their own faith, but cannot reasonably be disputed into Popery.

1. That Papists may dispute against Protestant heresies, but cannot dispute for their own religion: and the reason of this difference is plain, because Protestants allow of reason, and discourse in matters of religion; and therefore they may be confuted, if good reasons can be produced against them: and here the Romanists may try their skill; but the religion of Rome is not founded on reason, but on infallibility; and therefore is not the subject of a dispute, because the truth and certainty of those doctrines, is not resolved into the reasons of them. They ought to allege no other ground of their faith, but the infallibility of the Church; and they ought not to dispute about this neither: but those who will believe it may, and those who will not, may let it alone, because infallibility is not to be proved by reason; for reason proves nothing infallibly, and therefore cannot give us an infallible certainty of the Church's infallibility.

But you will say, if they have other arguments for the truth of their faith, besides the infallibility of the Church, why may they not urge those other reasons and arguments to convince

those, who will not own the Church's infallibility? I answer, because whatever other reasons they have, their faith is not resolved into them; and therefore it is not honest in them to urge those for the reasons of their faith, which are not the reasons why they believed: for let me ask them, suppose they may have very good reasons for some of their doctrines, do they believe them merely because they are reasonable? If they say they do, then they believe just as Protestants believe; and there is no need of infallibility, when men believe nothing but what is reasonable; and it is pity that so good a thing as infallibility should serve only to support an unreasonable faith.

Let me ask them again, can they have a sufficient certainty, that these reasons are good, without an infallible judge? If they can, then the faith of Protestants, which is grounded upon rational evidences, may be very certain too, though it be not infallible; if they cannot, then their reasons are none, since the very certainty of them is resolved into an infallible authority; and therefore they are no certain reasons, that is, not such as a man may rely on, when they are separated from infallibility; and consequently they ought never to be urged apart from infallibility, because they themselves do not think them good reasons, that is, not a sufficient foundation of faith alone: and then I know not why they should be urged at all; for infallibility can stand by itself, without the support of any reasons.

I ask them again, would they reject those doctrines which they think they can prove by such evident reasons, did they see those reasons as evidently confuted? If they would not, then it is plain, they do not believe them for the sake of those reasons; for if they did, they would reject them, when all their reasons were confuted: they only impose upon the world with a pretence and flourish of reason, and set up a man of straw for Protestants to shoot at; but whatever becomes of their reasons, they have a safe retreat into infallibility.

If they believed any doctrine because it is reasonable, if they will be true to themselves, they ought to reject all doctrines, which are unreasonable, or contrary to sense and reason: he who believes for the sake of reason, can never believe against it: for if reason makes a thing credible, then what is unreasonable is incredible too: and we may as reasonably disbelieve what is confirmed by reason, as believe what reason contradicts: and therefore it is not very modest to hear

men talk of reason in any case, who can believe such an absurd and unreasonable doctrine as transubstantiation.

Now whatever opinion Protestants have of reason, Papists ought not to pretend to it, because their faith has nothing to do with reason: it is a reproach to an infallible Church, and infallible faith, to need the supports of reason. And the truth is, those who will have nothing to do with reason, reason commonly has as little to do with them, but owes them a shame, whenever they pretend to her; and therefore they had as good let her alone.

2. Protestants may dispute against Popish doctrines, and to vindicate their own faith, but they cannot reasonably be disputed into Popery. When Papists allege Scripture, reason, or human authority for any doctrines of their religion, Protestants, who allow of the use of reason in religion, may examine and confute them: when Papists dispute against Protestant doctrines, Protestants are concerned to vindicate their own faith, or to renounce it; but if a Protestant understands himself, and his own principles, all the disputes in the world can never make him a Papist. For to be a Papist, does not signify merely to believe transubstantiation, or the worship of saints and images, and such-like Popish doctrines; but to resolve our faith into the infallible authority of the Church, and to believe whatever the Church believes, and for no other reason, but because the Church teaches it. This is the peculiar and distinguishing character of the Church of Rome, which divides it from all other Churches and sects of Christians; and therefore our late Popish writers are certainly in the right, to endeavour to bring the whole controversy to this issue; not to dispute about particular doctrines, which follow on course, when once you believe the Church to be infallible; but to persuade men that the Church is infallible, and that the Church of Rome is that infallible Church. Now, I say, no understanding Protestant can be disputed into this kind of Popery, and that for two plain reasons. 1. Because no arguments or disputations can give me an infallible certainty of the infallibility of the Church. 2. Because it is impossible by reason to prove, that men must not use their own reason and judgment in matters of religion.

1. No arguments can give me an infallible certainty of the infallibility of the Church. The great motive to any man to forsake the other communions of Christians, and to go over to the Church of Rome, is, to attain an infallibility in faith, which

is a wonderful good thing, if it were to be had ; but though the Church of Rome were infallible, and I should be convinced that there were some reason to think so, yet unless I can be infallibly assured of it my faith is still as fallible, as the Protestant faith is ; and I am no nearer to infallibility in the Church of Rome, than in the Church of England. For as I observed before, unless I can have an infallible certainty of the infallibility of the Church, I can have no infallibility at all : though the Church were infallible in all her decrees, I can never be infallibly certain of the truth of her decrees, unless I be infallibly certain that she is infallible. It is a known rule in logic, that the conclusion must follow the weaker part, and therefore it is impossible to infer an infallible faith from the fallible belief of the Church's infallibility.

And yet the best reasons in the world (which is all that disputing can do, to offer reasons for our faith) cannot give us an infallible certainty, because reason itself is not an infallible principle, at least the Church of Rome dares not own, that any man's private reason and judgment is infallible ; for then Protestants may set up for infallibility as well as Papists. No man, by reason and argument, can arrive at a greater certainty than Protestants may have, and yet no man can arrive at greater certainty, in the way of disputing, than reason and argument can give him ; and then a Popish convert, who is reasoned into the belief of infallibility, though he has changed his opinion, yet has no more infallibility now, than he had when he was a Protestant. Protestants without an infallible Church, may have all the certainty that reason and argument can give them ; and a convert has no greater certainty (if he have no more than what disputing could give him) for his infallible Church : and how is it possible then, that a reasonable man can be disputed out of the Church of England into the Church of Rome, upon such vain hopes of a more infallible certainty ? For let him go where he will, if he be led to Rome itself by his own fallible reason and judgment (which is the only guide he has in disputing), he will be the same fallible creature that ever he was. But to represent this the more familiarly, let us hear a short conference between a sturdy Protestant, and a new convert.

Prot. O, my old friend ! I am glad to meet you, for I have longed to know what change you find in yourself, since you are become an infallible believer.

Conv. I find, sir, what I expected, very great ease and

satisfaction of mind, since I am delivered from all doubtful disputes in such an important concernment as the salvation of my soul, and have a firm and sure rock to trust to, such an infallible Church as cannot err itself, nor misguide me.

Prot. This, I confess, is a very great advantage; and therefore as we have been formerly of the same Church and communion, I would be glad to keep your company also in so advantageous a change. Pray therefore tell me, how you came to be so infallibly persuaded of the infallibility of your Church.

Conv. With all my heart; and I shall be very glad of such company: and indeed, there are such powerful reasons for it, as I am sure must convince so free and ingenuous a mind, as you always carry about with you. For Christ has promised to build his Church upon St. Peter, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—

Prot. Hold, good sir! Reason! Are you got no farther than reason yet? Will reason ever make a man infallible? I have considered all the reasons that are used to this purpose, and know what to say to them, if that were our business; and the truth is, I have a great deal of unanswerable reason, to stay where I am; and am a little surprised, to think that you, or any man, should leave the Church of England for want of reason, or go to the Church of Rome for it: and therefore pray tell me the secret, for there must be something else to make converts besides reason.

Conv. Then I perceive you take me for a knave, who have changed my religion for base secular ends, without reason.

Prot. You know that best; but that was not my meaning: but the reason of my question was, because you changed for an infallible faith. Now if you rely still upon reason, I don't see how your faith is more infallible than mine: for I am as confident, as you can be, that I have as good reasons for my faith, and in my opinion, much better, than you have for yours.

Conv. I beg your pardon for that: I rely upon the authority of an infallible Church, you trust to your private reason.

Prot. And I beg your pardon, sir, for I rely on the authority of Scripture, which is as infallible as your Church.

Conv. But you rely on your own reason for the authority of Scripture, and those particular doctrines you draw from it.

Prot. And you rely on your own reason and judgment, for the infallibility of your Church, and consequently of all the

doctrines of it ; and therefore your infallible faith is as much resolved into your own fallible judgment, as the Protestant faith is, : so that the difference between us is not, that your faith is infallible, and ours fallible ; for they are both alike, call it what you will, fallible or infallible ; but the dispute is, whether your reason and judgment, or ours, be best ; and therefore, if you think your reason better than ours, you did well to change ; but if you changed your Church, hoping to grow more infallible by it, you were miserably mistaken, and may return to us again : for we have more rational certainty than you have, and you have no more infallible certainty than we. You think you are reasonably assured that your Church is infallible, and then you take up your religion upon trust from your Church, without, and many times against sense and reason, according as it happens ; so that you have only a general assurance of the infallibility of your Church, and that no greater than Protestants pretend to in other cases, *viz.* the certainty of reason and argument ; but have not so much as a rational assurance of the truth of your particular doctrines ; that if you be mistaken about the infallibility of your Church, you must be miserably mistaken about everything else, which you have no other evidence for. But now we are in general assured, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and in particular are assured, that the faith, which we profess, is agreeable to Scripture, or expressly contained in it, and does not contradict either sense or reason, nor any other principle of knowledge. So that we have as much assurance of every article of our faith, as you have of the infallibility of your Church ; and therefore have at least double and treble the assurance that you have. But if you know the reasons of your conversion, I desire to know of you, what made you think that you wanted certainty in the Church of England ?

Conv. Because with you every man is left to his own private reason and judgment, the effects of which are very visible in that infinite variety of sects among you, which shews what an uncertain thing your reason is, that so few judge alike of the power and validity of the same reasons.

Prot. And were you not sensible at the same time, that you were left to your own reason and judgment, when you turned Papist ? Are you not sensible, that men do as little agree about your reasons for infallibility, as they do about any Protestant reasons ? Do not I know the reasons alleged by you for the infallibility of your Church as well as you do :

and do we not still differ about them? And is not this as much an argument of the uncertainty of those reasons, which make you a Papist, that they cannot make me a Papist, as the dissent of Protestants in other matters, is of the uncertainty of their reasons? Could you indeed be infallibly assured of the infallibility of your Church, I grant you would have the advantage of us: but while you found your belief of infallibility upon such an uncertain principle, as you think reason is: if certainty had been your only aim, you might as well have continued in the Church of England, as have gone over to Rome.

This abundantly shews what a ridiculous thing it is for a Protestant to be disputed out of his Church and religion, upon a pretence of more infallible certainty in the Church of Rome: were they indeed inspired with an infallible assurance, that the Church of Rome is infallible, there might be some pretence for this; but an infallibility which has no better foundation than men's private reason, and private judgment, is no infallibility, but has all the same uncertainties, which they charge on the Protestant faith, and a great deal more, because it is not founded upon such great and certain reasons.

The plain truth is, men may be taught from their infancy to believe the Church infallible, and when they are grown up, may take it, without examination, for a first and self-evident principle, and think this an infallible faith: but men who understand the difference between the evidence of reason and infallibility, can never found an infallible faith on reason, nor think that a man who is reasoned into the belief of the infallibility of the Church, is more infallible in his faith, than a Protestant is: and such a man will see no reason to quit the Church of England, for the sake of an infallible faith; for though they had an infallible guide, yet reason cannot give them an infallible assurance of it, but can rise no higher at most than a Protestant certainty.

2. It is impossible also by reason to prove, that men must not use their own reason and judgment in matters of religion, If any man should attempt to persuade you of this, ask him, why then he goes about to dispute with you about religion? Whether men can dispute without using their own reason and judgment? Whether they can be convinced without it? Whether his offering to dispute with you against the use of your reason, does not prove him ridiculous and absurd? For if you must not use your reason, why does he appeal to your

reason? And whether you should not be as ridiculous and absurd as he, if by his reasons and arguments you should be persuaded to condemn the use of reason in religion? Which would be the same act to do, what you condemn, to use your reason when you condemn it. If you must not use your reason and private judgment, then you must not by any reasons be persuaded to condemn the use of reason; for to condemn is an act of judgment, which you must not use in matters of religion. So that this is a point which no man can dispute against, and which no man can be convinced of by disputing, without the reproach of self-contradiction.

This is an honourable way of silencing these troublesome and clamorous disputants, to let them see, that their principles will not allow of disputing, and that some of their fundamental doctrines, which they impose upon the world, are a direct contradiction to all disputes, for the very admitting of a dispute, confutes them; and the meanest man may quickly say more in this cause, than their greatest disputants can answer.

CHAP. II.

CONCERNING THE SEVERAL TOPICS OF DISPUTE.

SECT. I.

Concerning arguments from Reason.

2. THE next direction relates to the topics from which they dispute; which are, either Reason, Scripture, or the authority of the ancient Fathers and writers of the Christian Church; for the infallible authority of Popes, or General Councils, is the thing in dispute between us, and therefore can prove nothing till that be first proved by something else.

1. To begin then with Reason: now we do allow of reason in matters of religion; and our adversaries pretend to use it, when they think it will serve their turn, and rail at it, and despise it, when it is against them.

Not that we make natural reason the rule or the measure of our faith; for to believe nothing but what may be proved by natural reason, is to reject revelation, or to destroy the necessity of it; for what use is there of a revelation, or at least

what necessity of it, if nothing must be revealed, but what might have been known by natural reason without revelation; or at least what natural reason can fully comprehend, when it is revealed? But though we believe such things, when they are revealed by God, which natural reason could never have taught us, and which natural reason does not see the depths and mysteries of; and therefore do not stint our faith: and confine it within the narrow bounds of natural reason; yet we use our reason to distinguish a true from a counterfeit revelation, and we use reason to understand a revelation; and we reason and argue from revealed principles, as we do from the principles of natural knowledge: as from that natural principle, that there is but one God; we might conclude, without a revelation, that we must worship but one God: so from that revealed doctrine of one Mediator between God and man, we may as safely conclude, that we must make our applications, and offer up our prayers and petitions to God, only by this one Mediator; and so in other cases.

Now to direct Protestants how to secure themselves from being imposed on by the fallacious reasonings of Roman priests, I shall take notice of some of the chief faults in their way of reasoning; and when these are once known, it will be easy matter for men of ordinary understandings to detect their sophistry.

1. As first, we must allow of no reason against the authority of plain and express Scripture: this all men must grant, who allow the authority of Scripture to be superior to natural reason; for though Scripture cannot contradict plain, and necessary, and eternal reasons, *i. e.* what the universal reason of mankind teaches for a necessary and eternal truth; yet God may command such things, as we see no natural reason for, and forbid such things as we see no natural reason against; nay, it may be, when we think there are plausible reasons against what God commands, and for what he forbids: but in all such cases, a divine law must take place against our uncertain reasonings; for we may reasonably conclude, that God understands the reasons and natures of things, better than we do.

As for instance, when there is such an express law as, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve:” no reason in the world can justify the worship of any other being, good or bad spirits, besides God, because there is an express law against it, and no reason can take place against

a law. The like may be said of the second Commandment, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing which is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them." Which is so express a law against image-worship, that no reason must be admitted for it. No man need to trouble himself to answer the reasons urged for such practices, for no reasons ought to be allowed, nor any dispute admitted against such express laws.

This, I suppose, all men will grant : but then the difficulty is, what is an express law ? For the sense of the law is the law ; and if there may be such a sense put on the words, as will reconcile these reasons with the law, we must not say then, that such reasons are against the law, when, though they may be against the law in some sense, yet they are consistent with other senses of the law ; and it is most likely, that is the true sense of the law, which has the best reason on its side.

It must be confessed there is some truth in this, when the words of the law are capable of different senses, and reason is for one sense, and the other sense against reason, there it is fit, that a plain and necessary reason should expound the law : but when the law is not capable of such different senses, or there is no such reason as makes one sense absurd, and the other necessary, the law must be expounded according to the most plain and obvious signification of the words, though it should condemn that, which we think, there may be some reason for, or at least no reason against ; for otherwise it is an easy matter to expound away all the laws of God. To be sure all men must grant that such reasons as destroy the law, or put an absurd or impossible fence on it, are against the law, and therefore must be rejected, how plausible soever they appear : as for instance, some there are, who, to excuse the Church of Rome from idolatry in worshipping saints, and angels, and the Virgin Mary, positively affirm, that no man can be guilty of idolatry, who worships one supreme God ; as a late author expressly teaches : "As for the invocation of saints, unless they worship them as the supreme God, the charge of idolatry is an idle word ; and the adoration itself, which is given to them as saints, is a direct protestation against idolatry, because it supposes a superior deity ; and that supposition cuts off the very being of idolatry."* Now, not to examine what force there

* Reasons for abrogating the Test, p. 133.

is in this reason, our present inquiry is only, how this agrees with the first commandment, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me?" Before my face, as it is in the Hebrew: which supposes an acknowledgment of the supreme God, together with other gods; for otherwise, though they worship other gods, they do not do it before the face of God, while they see him, as it were, present before them: to worship other gods, in the presence of the supreme God, or before his face, as that phrase signifies, is to worship them together with him; and therefore this is well expressed by the Septuagint, by *πλὴν ἐμοῦ*, 'besides me;' which supposes that they worshipped him too. And our Saviour expounds this law by "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."* So that this reason, that there can be no idolatry, where the Lord Jehovah is worshipped as the supreme God, contradicts the very letter of this law.

How then does this author get rid of the first commandment? Truly by laying it all aside: for he gives this as the whole sense of the first commandment, that God enjoins the worship of himself, who, by his Almighty power, had delivered them from their Egyptian bondage.† But is this all that these words, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," signify? The worship of God, indeed, is supposed in them; but the express words of the law, are not for the worship of the Lord Jehovah, but against the worship of any other gods, before him, or besides him: but according to our new expositor, this is no part of the law, though according to the express words, it is the principal, if not the whole meaning of it.

If this argument be good, *viz.* that idolatry is nothing else, but the worship of other beings besides the Lord Jehovah, as supreme gods, then other gods, in this commandment, must signify other supreme gods; and then the commandment runs thus: "Thou shalt have no other supreme gods before me." Now this is a very absurd sense, because it supposes, that men may believe and worship more supreme gods than one; for if there can be but one supreme God, and by gods in the commandment, be meant supreme gods, then it is absurd to forbid any man to have other supreme gods, because no man can acknowledge two supremes: it should have been, "Thou shalt not have any other God besides me," not "gods:" for though it had been possible for them to have acknowledged some other

* Matth. iv. 10.

† Ibid. p. 80.

God to be supreme, and rejected the Lord Jehovah from being supreme, yet they could not have other supreme gods. But it is evident, that God here forbids the worship of a plurality of gods, of other gods ; and therefore they could not all be supreme gods.

But suppose it had been any other God in the single number, yet to understand this of a supreme God, is very absurd ; because there is no other supreme God, but the Lord Jehovah, and those who worship but one supreme God, worship him, and none else. For a supreme God is not to be pointed at, is not to be distinguished by his person or feature, as one man is distinguished from another : indeed a prince may properly say to his subjects, you shall own none but me for your king, because they know his person, and can distinguish him from all other men. But the Jews never saw God, nor any likeness or similitude of him ; they were not acquainted with his person, nor could they distinguish him from other gods, by any personal characters ; they knew him only by his notion and character of the supreme Being, who made the world, and all things in it, and brought them by a mighty hand out of the land of Egypt. Now does it not sound very strange, that the supreme God, who is known only by this character, that he is Supreme, the great Creator and Sovereign Lord of the world, should make a law, that we should worship no other supreme God but himself ; when it is absolutely impossible, that he who worships a supreme and sovereign God should worship any other god but himself, because he alone is the supreme God ? and therefore those who worship the supreme God, under this notion, as supreme, worship him, and no other being. So that, if we will make sense of it, the meaning of the first commandment is plainly this : “Thou shalt not give Divine honours to any other beings, as to inferior gods, as the idolatrous practice of the world now is, which worships a great many things for gods ; but thou shalt worship only one supreme and sovereign Being, the Maker and sovereign Lord of the world, which is I myself, the Lord Jehovah, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” When the supreme God commands us to worship himself, the meaning must be, that we pay our worship and adorations to a supreme being, considered as supreme ; and he who worships such a supreme being, worships the true God, whom we can distinguish from false gods only by this character, that he is supreme : and when this supreme Being forbids us to worship any other gods, it

must signify, that we must worship nothing which is not supreme, not that we must not believe that which is not supreme to be the supreme God ; which would be ridiculous nonsense, to command them not to own that Being for the supreme God, which they know not to be supreme.

But it may be said, that the heathens did worship some beings, who were not the supreme God, as supreme, as this author tells us, they did the sun, though nobody told him so, that I know of ; for Macrobius, whom he cites in this cause, does not say, that they worshipped the sun as supreme God, though he says, that most of the gods they worshipped, did signify the sun : but suppose the sun were the chief object of their worship, and looked on as the greatest and most principal god ; this does not prove that they worshipped it as the supreme God : for these are two very different things, to be worshipped as the chief God, which such a people have, and to be worshipped under the notion of absolute supreme. Some Pagan idolaters might worship a creature as their chief and greatest deity, and might call it their great, their greatest god, because it is the greatest god they have ; their king and prince of gods, as Mr. Selden tells us, they called the sun, as being the chief planet who directed and governed the influences of the rest, not as the maker of the world, as this author asserts : but those who direct their worship to a supreme and sovereign being, considered as absolutely supreme, infinite in all perfections, the Maker and Governor of the whole world, can under this notion worship no other but the Lord Jehovah, because there is no other supreme God but he. Which shews, that the first commandment is so far from forbidding the worship of other supreme gods, besides the Lord Jehovah, that to make sense of it, these other gods must be expounded, not of supreme, but inferior deities ; and it is so far from being the notion of idolatry, to worship other supreme beings, besides the Lord Jehovah, that it is nonsense to suppose it. The true notion of idolatry in the first commandment, is to worship some inferior beings, together with the supreme God ; it is a grosser sort of idolatry, when men wholly neglect the worship of the supreme God, and worship some creature for their greatest and chiefest god ; and it is worse still, when men worship bad spirits, together with the supreme God : but it is evident this law condemns the worship of any inferior beings, though we do also worship the supreme God.

I shall give but one instance more of this nature, and that

is, the second commandment, which in such express words, forbids the worship of all images, of what kind or nature soever. Now whatever reasons men may imagine there are for the worship of images, they can be of no force against an express law : and if these words be not express, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," &c. I despair of ever seeing an express law. For had God intended by this law to forbid the worship of any images, under what notion or respects soever, I would desire to know what more significant and comprehensive words could have been used to have declared his mind, unless he had expressly rejected those false interpretations, which the patrons of image-worship have since invented, but were never thought on at that time.

The same author, whom I have so often mentioned, having expounded the first commandment* only to a positive sense, not to forbid the worship of other gods, but only to command the worship of the Lord Jehovah, expressly contrary to the very letter and plain sense of the law ; agreeably to this, he makes the second commandment only to forbid the worship of idols or false gods, and not that neither, unless they take them for the supreme Deity. His words are these :

"In the next place he forbids them the worship of all idols, *i. e.* as himself describes them, the likeness or similitude of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. A plain and indeed a logical definition this, that idolatry is giving the worship of the supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible deity, or any thing that can be represented by an image, which nothing but corporeal beings can, and to suppose such a being the supreme Deity, is the only true and proper idolatry." Now let any man judge, whether this be not such a gloss as utterly destroys the text.

As for his worship of idols, there is no such word in the law, but images, likenesses, similitudes ; but yet I will not dispute about this, for an idol does not only signify a false god, but the images either of false gods, or false and corporeal images of the true God. For the idols of the heathens, as the Psalmist tells us,† "are silver and gold; the work of men's hands;" which can relate to nothing but images and pictures ; for corporeal deities, which were made by God, are not the work of men's hands.

* Ibid. p. 30.

† Psal. cxxxv. 15.

Now idolatry, he says, "is giving the worship of the supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible deity, or any thing which can be represented by an image, which nothing but corporeal beings can." Now how plain and logical soever this definition of idolatry be, there is not a word of it in the text. That forbids not the worship of any created, corporeal, or visible deity (which is forbid in the first commandment), but only the worship of images, "the likeness of any thing in heaven or earth, or in the water under the earth." Now an image differs from the thing whose image it is. And it is a very strange exposition of the second commandment, which forbids nothing else but the worship of images, to take no notice of the worship of images as forbid in it. According to this gloss upon the law, a man may worship ten thousand images and pictures, so he do not worship any visible and corporeal deity, and not break this commandment; which I think is not to give the sense of the law, but to expound it away.

But how does the worship of corporeal and visible deities, and nothing else, appear to be forbid by this law, which mentions nothing at all but the likeness of things in heaven, and earth, and water? Why, our learned author imagines that no images can be made, but only for corporeal and visible deities, because nothing but corporeal beings can be represented by an image: which conceit is worth its weight in gold; for it evidently proves, that there are no pictures of God the Father, nor of the Trinity, in the Church of Rome, because they are not corporeal deities, and therefore cannot be represented by an image: so miserably have all travellers been mistaken, who tell us of a great many such pictures, and not very decent ones neither. There can, indeed, be no picture, or image, to represent the likeness and similitude of an incorporeal God, but yet the visible parts of heaven and earth, and the visible creatures in them, may be represented by images, and the images of such visible things may be made the symbolical representations of invisible and incorporeal deities; and such invisible and incorporeal deities may be worshipped in the likeness and similitude of corporeal things; and then I am sure, to forbid the worship of images, may signify something more than merely to forbid the worship of some visible and corporeal deities; for it may signify the worship of invisible and incorporeal deities, by visible images. But I perceive he imagined, that when God forbade them to make and worship

the likeness of any thing in heaven, in earth, or in the waters under the earth, he only forbade the worship of those beings, whose likeness or images they made ; whereas all men know, that those very idolaters who worshipped these glorious parts of the creation, did not represent them in their proper likenesses and figures ; and that those who worshipped invisible and incorporeal beings, did it by material and visible figures ; which plainly proves, that when God forbade the worship of images, he had not respect merely to visible and corporeal deities, but forbade image-worship, whether they were the images of visible and corporeal, or of invisible and incorporeal deities.

Our author durst not say (as the Roman advocates do), that God in the second commandment only forbids the worship of images as gods ; which is such glorious nonsense, that he could not digest it : and therefore he supposes, that God does not forbid the worship of images at all, but only of such corporeal deities, as may be represented by images ; which is a more genteel way of discarding the second commandment, than to leave it out of their books of devotions. But if he will stand to this, he condemns the Popish worship of dead men and women, for they are corporeal deities ; nay, of Christ himself, considered as a man, who might be represented by an image or picture. And thus I doubt he has done the Church of Rome no kindness at all : for this is a demonstration against the worship of saints, and the Virgin Mary, because they are created, corporeal and visible beings, who may be represented by images ; and he has thought of an argument against images, which neither the Scripture, nor the Church of Rome, know anything of : the Church of Rome thinks it a good argument for the images of Christ, and the saints, and the Virgin Mary, that they are representable by images and pictures ; and therefore there can be no hurt in such images : and the Scripture perpetually urges that argument against images, that the Deity cannot be represented by an image ; but neither of these arguments are good, if our author's notion be good : for then to worship such corporeal beings, as may be represented by images, is to worship corporeal gods, which is idolatry. And there is no danger in the images of an incorporeal deity, which cannot represent the god for which they are made ; for whatever the image be, this is not to worship a corporeal god, since we know him to be incorporeal, and therefore it is not idolatry.

But he has one salvo still to excuse those from idolatry, who worship even corporeal gods (for he speaks not a word of worshipping the images of any gods), that they are not idolaters, unless they worship such corporeal gods, supposing them to be the supreme deity ; whereby he explains what he means by giving the worship of the supreme God to any created, corporeal, or visible deity ; *viz.* to think such a God to be the supreme God, is to worship it as supreme. And thus those who worshipped the sun, not thinking him to be the supreme God, but the chief minister of providence under the supreme God, with reference to this lower world, as most of the sun-idolaters seemed to do, were not idolaters. Nay, very few of the philosophers, though they worshipped their country gods, were idolaters, because they either did not believe them to be any gods, or at least not to be the supreme ; as it is certain Socrates, Plato, Tully, and many others, did not.

But it is plain, that to worship the supreme God, is not merely to suppose him to be supreme ; for St Paul tells us, that there were some, who knew God, but did not worship him as God : and therefore there is an external and visible worship, which is due to the supreme God, as well as the belief, that he is supreme. And if this worship which is due to the supreme God, be given to any being which we ourselves do not believe to be supreme, we are idolaters ; and then, though we do not believe the gods we worship to be supreme, any kind or degree of religious worship (or which is used as an act of religion, not as common and civil respects) is idolatry. This commandment brings it as low as merely bowing to an image, and then I doubt no other act of religious worship can escape the charge of idolatry.

But though it is not my business to pursue this author, I cannot pass over the very next paragraph, where he observes, “ though there may seem to be two sorts of it” (this idolatry in worshipping corporeal beings) : “ First, either to worship a material and created being, as the supreme Deity : or, secondly, to ascribe any corporeal form or shape to the Divine nature, yet in result, both are but one ; for to ascribe unto the supreme God any corporeal form, is the same thing as to worship a created being, for so is every corporeal substance.” Which is a very wonderful paragraph : for thus some of the ancient Christians, who believed God to be corporeal (as Tertullian himself did), but yet did not believe that he was

created, but that he created all things, were as very idolaters, as those who worshipped the sun or earth : and I would gladly know, who those men are, who ascribe unto the supreme God, a corporeal form, and yet think that he was created. I am apt to think they differ a little in their philosophy from our author, and did believe that a corporeal supreme Deity might be uncreated ; and then I suppose, there may be some difference also between their worshipping a corporeal created, and a corporeal uncreated God, at least if men's belief and opinions of things makes a difference, as this author must allow ; for, if I understand him, to worship a corporeal being, without believing it to be supreme, does not make them idolaters ; but if they believe it supreme, it does ; and by the same reason, though to worship a supreme corporeal created deity (if that be not a contradiction) be idolatry, yet to worship a corporeal, which they believe to be an uncreated deity, is no idolatry : for though I believe, with our author, that all corporeal beings are created, yet I suppose, those who believed God to be corporeal, did not believe that every thing that is corporeal was created.

So that the first and second commandments are very plain and express laws, the one forbidding the religious worship of all inferior beings, corporeal or incorporeal, with or without the supreme God, or forbidding the worship of all other beings but the supreme God ; the other forbidding the external and visible worship of any material images and pictures : and though I am certain, there can be no good arguments to justify such practices as are forbid by these laws, yet no Christian need trouble himself to answer them ; for be they what they will, it is a sufficient answer to them, to say, they are against an express law.

2. Another rule is, in matters of faith, or in such things as can be known only by revelation, not to build our faith upon any reason, without the authority of Scripture. That this may be the better understood, I shall briefly shew what those things are, which can be known only by revelation, and therefore which every Protestant should demand a plain Scripture-proof for, before he believes them, whatever reasons are pretended for them : as,

1. Whatever depends solely upon the will and appointment of God, which God might do, or might not do, as he pleased. In such cases our only inquiry is, what God has done ? And this can be known only by revelation ; for reason cannot

discover it, because it depends not upon any necessary reason, but on the free and arbitrary appointment of God: as St. Paul tells us, that as “no man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of man, that is in him; so no man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God:” that is, as no man can tell the secret thoughts and purposes of a man, nor how he will determine himself in matters of his own free choice and election: so what depends purely upon the will of God, is known only to the Spirit of God, and therefore can be made known to us only by revelation.

Many such things there are in dispute between us and the Church of Rome, which depends so entirely upon the will of God, that they may be, or may not be, as God pleases. As for instance:

No man, or company of men, can be infallible, unless God bestow infallibility on them; for infallibility is not a natural endowment, but a supernatural gift; and therefore no reason can prove the Bishop of Rome, or a General Council to be infallible. God may make them infallible if he pleases, and if he pleases, he may not do it: and therefore our only inquiry here is, what God has done? And this can be known only by revelation.

Thus that the Church of Rome only, and those Churches that are in communion with her, should be the Catholic Church, and the Bishop of Rome the Œcumenical pastor, and the centre of Catholic unity, must depend wholly upon institution; for nothing but the will and appointment of God, can give this pre-eminence and prerogative to the Church and Bishop of Rome, above all other Churches and bishops. No reason then can prove this without plain and express Scripture to prove such an institution.

Were there nothing in Scripture or reason to prove, that the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is not a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, yet no reason can prove, that it is: for the virtue and acceptation of a sacrifice, entirely depends upon the will and appointment of God, at least so far, that no sacrifice can be propitiatory without it: and therefore there can be no other proof, that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice, but the declaration of God’s will and institution, that it shall be so.

2. Those things can also be proved only by Scripture, which are done in the other world, which is an unknown and invisible state to us, any farther than the Scripture has revealed it:

and men may more reasonably expect to find out, by the power of reason, what is done every day in China, or the most remote and unknown parts of the earth, than what is done in the other world. And then there are a great many things wherein you must reject all pretences to reason, any farther than it is supported by plain and evident Scripture. As to give some instances of this also :

1. No reason can prove, that there is such a place as purgatory, for that is an invisible place in the other world ; if there be any such place, no man living ever saw it ; and then how can any man know, that there is such a place, unless it be revealed ? To attempt to prove that there is such a place as purgatory, merely by reason, is just as if a man, who had some general notion of an inquisition, but never had any credible information, that there actually was any such place, should undertake, to prove by reason, that there is and must be such a place as the inquisition ; though he should happen to guess right, yet it is certain his reasons signified nothing ; for some countries have the inquisition, and some have not ; and therefore there might have been no inquisition any where, how strong soever the reasons for it might be thought to be. We may as well describe by the power of reason, the world in the moon, and what kind of inhabitants there are there, by what laws they live, what their business, what their pleasures, and what their punishments are, as pretend to prove that there is a purgatory in the next world, for they are both equally unknown to us ; and if reason cannot prove that there is such a place as purgatory, nothing else which relates to purgatory, can be proved by reason.

2. Nor can we know what the state of saints in heaven is, without a revelation, for no man has been there to see : the state of the other world is such things as neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. And then I cannot understand how we should know these things by reason.

The Church of Rome teaches us to pray to saints, and to fly to their help and aid. And there are a great many things which a wise man would desire to know, before he can think it fit to pray to them ; which yet it is impossible to know, without a revelation : as, whether the saints we direct our prayers to, be in heaven ? Which is very fit to be known, and yet can certainly be known but of a very few of that vast number, that are worshipped in the Church of Rome ; the Apostles of

Christ, and the Virgin Mary, we have reason to believe are in heaven, and we may hope well of others, but we cannot know it : no man can see who is there, and bare hope, how strong soever, is not a sufficient foundation for such a religious invocation of unknown saints, who, after all our persuasions that they are in heaven, may be in hell, or at least in purgatory, where they want our prayers, but are not in a condition to intercede for us.

Thus it is very necessary to know, what the power and authority of the saints in heaven is, before we pray to them ; for it is to no purpose to pray to them, unless we know they can help us. The Council of Trent recommends to us the invocation of saints, as of those who reign with Christ in heaven, and therefore have power and authority to present our petitions, and procure those blessings we pray for. And if I could find any such thing in Scripture, it would be a good reason to pray to them ; but all the arguments in the world cannot prove this, without a revelation : they may be in heaven, and not be mediators and advocates.

Thus, whatever their power and authority may be, it is to no purpose to pray to them, unless we are sure that they hear our prayers ; and this, nothing but a revelation can assure us of ; for no natural reason can assure us, that mere creatures, as the most glorious saints in heaven are, can hear our soft, nay, mental prayers, at such a vast distance, as there is between heaven and earth.

Such matters as these, which reason can give us no assurance of, if they be to be proved at all, must be proved by Scripture ; and therefore, as the pretence of proving these things by reason, is vain, so no Protestant should be so vain, as to trouble himself to answer such reasons.

But you will say, the Papists do pretend to prove these things by Scripture. I answer, so far it is very well ; and I only desire our Protestant to keep them to the Scripture proofs, and to reject all their reasons ; and then let them see what they can make of it. As for Scripture proofs, they shall be considered presently.

3. More particularly you must renounce all such reasons, as amount to no more than some may-bes, and possibilities ; for what only may be, may not be, and every thing that is possible, is not actually done. As for instance : when you ask these men, how you can be assured, that the saints in heaven can hear our prayers ? They offer to shew you by what ways this

may be done: they may see all things in the glass of the Trinity, and thereby know all things that God knows. Which is but a may-be; and yet it is a more likely may-be, that there is no such glass as gives the saints a comprehensive view of all that is in God. Well, but God can reveal all the prayers to the saints, which are made to them on earth. Very right! we dispute not God's power to do this, but desire to know, whether he does it or not; and his bare power to do it, does not prove that: but the saints in heaven may be informed of what is done on earth, by those who go from hence thither, or by those ministering angels, who frequently pass between heaven and earth: but this may not be too; and if it were, it would not answer the purposes of devotion: for in this way of intercourse, the news may come too late to the saints, to whom we pray, to do us any good: as, suppose a man pray to the Virgin Mary in the hour of death, or in a great storm at sea, the man may be dead, and shipwrecked, before the Virgin knows of his prayers, and may carry the first news of it into the other world himself. Such kind of may-bes and conjectures as these, are a very sorry foundation for an infallible Church to build her faith on.

4. You must reject also all such reasons in divine and spiritual things, as are drawn from earthly patterns. A considering man would a little wonder, how a Papist should so punctually determine what is done in the other world, without speaking with any one who has seen it, and without having any revelation about it, as I have already observed; but whoever considers many of their arguments, will soon find that they make this world the pattern of the next, and reason from sensible to spiritual things.

Thus the true foundation of saint worship is, that men judge of the court of heaven by the courts of earthly princes: the most effectual way to obtain any request of our prince, is to address ourselves to some powerful favourite; and they take it for granted that all saints and angels in heaven are such favourites, and can obtain whatever they ask; and therefore they pray very devoutly to them, and beg their intercession with God and their Saviour. Especially in earthly courts, the queen-mother is supposed to have a powerful influence upon the young prince her son; and therefore they do not doubt but the Virgin Mary, the mother of Christ, can do what she pleases with her Son: and since it is generally observed, that women are more soft and tender, and compassionate, than men,

they hope to gain that by her intercession, which he, who died for them, would not grant without it ; and therefore they beg her to shew herself to be a mother, that is, to take the authority of a mother upon her, and command her Son. Thus princes and great men love to have their pictures set up in public places, and to have all civil respects paid to them, which redounds to the honour of those whose pictures they are ; and therefore they imagine that this is as acceptable to Christ, and the saints, as it is to men ; as if the other world were nothing else but a new scene of sense and passion.

Mankind is very apt to such kind of reasonings as these ; and indeed they can have no other, when they will undertake to guess at unseen, and unknown things : but if there be any difference between the court of heaven and earth, if pure spirits, who are separated from flesh and sense, have other passions and resentments, than men have ; that is, if we must not judge of spiritual things by sense, of the government of God by the passions of men, then such reasonings as these may betray us to absurd and foolish superstitions, but are a very ill foundation for any new and uncommanded acts of worship.

5. Never admit any arguments merely from the usefulness, conveniency, or supposed necessity of any thing, to prove that it is. As for instance : a supreme œcumenical bishop, and an infallible judge of controversies, are thought absolutely necessary to the unity of the Church, and certainty of faith, and confounding of schisms and heresies. If there be not a supreme pastor, there can be no unity ; if there be not an infallible judge, there can be no certainty in religion ; every man must be left to his own private judgment, and then there will be as many different religions, as there are faces. Now if I thought all this were true (as I believe not a word of it is), I should only conclude, that it is great pity that there is not an universal pastor and infallible judge instituted by Christ ; but if you would have me conclude from these premises, *ergo*, there is an universal bishop and head of the Church, and an infallible judge of controversies, I must beg your pardon for that ; for such arguments as these do not prove that there is such a judge, but only that there ought to be one, and therefore I must conclude no more from them. Indeed, this is a very fallacious way of reasoning, because what we may call useful, convenient, necessary, may not be so in itself ; and we have reason to believe it is not so, if God have not appointed what we think so useful,

convenient, or necessary ; which is a more true, and more modest way of reasoning, than to conclude that God has appointed such a judge, when no such thing appears, only because we think it so useful and necessary, that he ought to do it. These directions are sufficient to preserve all considering Protestants from being imposed on by the fallacious reasonings of Papists.

SECT. II.

Concerning Scripture Proofs.

2. Let us now consider their Scripture proofs, though it is not choice, but necessity, which puts them upon this trial : when they have good Catholics to deal with, a little Scripture will serve the turn, but heretics will be satisfied with nothing else ; and therefore in disputing with them, they are forced to make some little show and appearance of proving their doctrine by Scripture ; but they come very unwillingly to it, and make as much of a little, as may be. The truth is, there is evidence enough, for they have no great confidence in the Scripture themselves, and therefore do not deal honestly and fairly with poor heretics, when they make their boasts of Scripture.

For did they believe that their doctrines which they endeavour to prove from Scripture, were plainly and evidently contained in them, why should they deny the people the liberty of reading the Scriptures ? If the Scriptures be for them, why should they be against the Scriptures ? The common pretence is, that those who are unlearned, put very wild senses upon Scripture, and expound it by their own fancies ; which, in many cases indeed, is too true : but why should the Church of Rome be more afraid of this, than other Protestant Churches ? If they think the Scripture is as much for them, as we think it for us, why dare they not venture this as well as we ? We are not afraid men should read the Scripture, though we see what wild interpretations some put on them, because we are certain we can prove our faith by Scripture, and are able to satisfy all honest men, who will impartially study the Scriptures, that we give the true sense of them ; and if they believed, they could do so to, why do they avoid this trial, whenever they can ? For though they admit people to dispute from the Scripture in England, where they cannot help it, yet they will not allow them so much as to see the Scrip-

tures in Italy or Spain, where they have power to hinder it : nay, they themselves do in effect confess, that the peculiar doctrines and practices of their religion, wherein they differ from all other Christian Churches, cannot be proved by Scripture. And therefore, to help them out, where the Scripture fails, they fly to unwritten traditions, which they make of equal authority with the Scriptures themselves ; which they would never do, were they not convinced, that the Scriptures are not so plain on their side, as to satisfy any man, who has not already given himself up to the Church of Rome with an implicit faith.

And therefore, before you enter into any debate about the sense of any particular texts of Scripture, and their way of proving their particular doctrines from Scripture, ask them two questions ; without a plain answer to which, it is to no purpose to dispute with them out of Scripture.

Ask first, whether they will allow the holy Scriptures to be a complete and perfect rule of faith ; that no Christian ought to receive any doctrine for an article of faith, which cannot be proved from Scripture ? This, to be sure, they must not allow, unless they will reject the Council of Trent, which gives as venerable an authority to tradition, as to Scripture itself : since then they have two rules, Scripture and tradition ; when they pretend to dispute from Scripture, it is reasonable to know of them, whether they will stand to Scripture, and reject such a doctrine, if it cannot be plainly proved out of Scripture : for if they will not stand to this, they give up their cause, and there is no need to dispute with them : for why should I dispute with any man from Scripture, who will not stand to the determination of Scripture ? We Protestants, indeed, do own the authority of Scripture ; and what we see plainly proved out of Scripture, we must abide by : which is reason enough for us to examine the Scripture proofs, which are produced by our adversaries. But it is sufficient to make them blush, if they had any modesty, to pretend to prove their doctrines from Scriptures, when they themselves do not believe them merely upon the authority of Scripture, and dare not put their cause upon that issue ; which gives a just suspicion, that they are conscious to themselves, that their Scripture proofs are not good, and should make Protestants very careful, how they are imposed on them. To dispute upon such principles as are not owned on both sides, can establish nothing, though it may blunder and confound an adversary ; it is only

a trial of wit, where the subtlest disputant will have the victory ; and it is not worth the while for any man to dispute upon these terms.

This is not to reject the authority of Scriptures, because the Papists reject it, which no Protestant can or will do, but it is an effectual way for men, who are not skilled in disputations, to deliver themselves from the troublesome importunities of Popish priests, when learned men, who can detect their fallacies are out of the way. Let them but ask them, whether all the peculiar doctrines of the Church of Rome can be proved by plain Scripture evidence ? If they say, they can ; then they must reject the necessity of unwritten traditions, and acknowledge the Scripture to be a complete and perfect rule of faith. A point, which I believe, no understanding priest will yield. If they say, they cannot ; ask them, with what confidence they pretend to prove that from Scripture, which they confess is not in it ? Why they go about to impose upon you, and to persuade you to believe that upon the authority of Scripture, which they themselves confess, is not, at least not plainly, contained in Scripture.

2. Ask such disputants, who allege the authority of Scripture, to prove their Popish doctrines, how they themselves know what the sense of Scripture is, and how you shall know it ? For it is a ridiculous undertaking to prove anything by Scripture, unless there be a certain way of finding out the sense of Scripture. Now there can be but three ways of doing this, either by an infallible interpreter, or by the unanimous consent of primitive Fathers, or by such human means as are used to find out the sense of other books.

I. If they say, we must learn the sense of Scripture from an infallible interpreter ; tell them, this is not to dispute, but to beg the cause. They are to prove from Scripture, the doctrines of the Church of Rome ; and to do this, they would have us take the Church of Rome's exposition of Scripture. And then we had as good take her word for all, without disputing. But yet,

1. They know, that we reject the pretences of an infallible interpreter : we own no such infallible judge of the sense of Scripture. And therefore, at least, if they will dispute with us, and prove their doctrines by Scripture, they must fetch their proofs from the Scriptures themselves, and not appeal to an infallible interpreter, whom we disown : which is like appealing to a judge in civil matters, whom one of the contend-

ing parties thinks incompetent, and to whose judgment they will not stand, which is never likely to end any controversy : and yet they cannot quit an infallible interpreter, without granting, that we may understand the Scriptures without such an interpreter, which is to give up the cause of infallibility.

2. One principal dispute between us and the Church of Rome, is about this infallible interpreter ; and they know that we will not own such an interpreter, unless they can prove from Scripture, that there is such an one, and who he is. The inquiry then is, how we shall learn from Scripture, that there is such an infallible interpreter ? that is, who shall expound those Scriptures to us, which must prove that there is an infallible interpreter ? If without an infallible interpreter, we cannot find out the true sense of Scripture, how shall we know the true sense of Scripture, before we know this infallible interpreter ? For an interpreter, how infallible soever he be, cannot interpret Scripture for us, before we know him : and if we must know this infallible interpreter by Scripture, we must at least understand those Scriptures, which direct us to this infallible interpreter, without his assistance. So that of necessity, some Scriptures must be understood without an infallible interpreter, and therefore he is not necessary for the interpretation of all Scripture : and then I desire to know, why other Scriptures may not be understood the same way, by which we must find out the meaning of those texts which direct us to an infallible interpreter ? There are a hundred places of Scripture, which our adversaries must grant, are as plain and easy to be understood as those : and we believe it as easy a matter to find all the other Trent articles in Scripture, as the supremacy and infallibility of the bishop of Rome. If ever there needed an infallible interpreter of Scripture, it is to prove such an infallible interpreter from Scripture ; but upon this occasion he cannot be had, and if we may make shift without him here, we may as well spare him in all other cases.

3. Suppose we were satisfied from Scripture, that there is such an infallible interpreter, yet it were worth knowing, where his infallible interpretation is to be found ; for if there be such an interpreter who never interprets, I know not how either they or we shall understand Scripture the better for him : now, have either Popes or General Councils given us an authentic and infallible exposition of Scripture ? I know of none such : all the expositions of Scripture in the Church of Rome, are writ by private doctors, who were far enough from being

infallible ; and the business of General Councils, was not to expound Scripture, but to define articles of faith : and therefore we find the sense of very few texts of Scripture synodically defined by any General Council : I think, not above four or five by the Council of Trent. So that after all their talk of an infallible interpreter, when they undertake to expound particular texts, and to dispute with us about the sense of them, they have no more infallibility in this, than we have ; for if they have an infallible interpreter, they are never the better for him, for he has not given them an infallible interpretation, and therefore they are forced to do as Protestants do, interpret Scripture according to their own skill and understanding, which, I suppose, they will not say, is impossible.

But you will say, though the Church has not given us an infallible interpretation of Scripture, yet she has given us an infallible exposition of the faith, and that is an infallible rule for expounding Scripture. I answer, there is a vast difference between these two : for our dispute is not about the sense of their Church, but about the sense of the Scripture ; we know what doctrines their Church has defined, but we desire to see them proved from Scripture : and is it not a very modest and pleasant proposal, when the dispute is, how their faith agrees with Scripture, to make their faith the rule of expounding Scripture ? Though, I confess, that is the only way I know of, to make their faith and the Scriptures agree ; but this brings the Scripture to their faith, does not prove their faith from Scripture.

II. As for expounding Scripture by the unanimous consent of primitive Fathers : this is indeed the rule which the Council of Trent gives, and which their doctors swear to observe ; how well they keep this oath, they ought to consider. Now as to this, you may tell them, that you would readily pay a great deference to the unanimous consent of Fathers, could you tell how to know it ; and therefore, in the first place, you desire [to know the agreement of how many Fathers makes an unanimous consent : for you have been told, that there hath been as great variety in interpreting Scripture among the ancient Fathers, as among our modern interpreters ; that there are very few, if any controverted texts of Scripture, which are interpreted by an unanimous consent of all the Fathers. If this unanimous consent then signify all the Fathers, we shall be troubled to find such a consent in expounding Scripture. Must it then be the unanimous consent of the

greatest number of Fathers? This will be a very hard thing, especially for unlearned men, to tell noses: we can know the opinion only of those Fathers who were the writers in every age, and whose writings have been preserved down to us; and who can tell, whether the major numbers of those Fathers who did not write, or whose writings are lost, were of the same mind with those whose writings we have? And why must the major part be always the wisest and best men? And if they were not, the consent of a few wise men, is to be preferred before great numbers of other expositors.

Again, ask them, whether these Fathers were infallible, or traditionary expositors of Scripture, or whether they expounded Scripture according to their own private reason and judgment: if they were infallible expositors, and delivered the traditionary sense and interpretation of Scripture, it is a little strange, how they should differ in their expositions of Scripture, and as strange how private doctors and bishops should in that age come to be infallible, and how they should lose it in this; for now infallibility is confined to the Bishop of Rome, and a General Council. If they were not infallible expositors, how comes their interpretation of Scripture to be so sacred, that it must not be opposed? Nay, how comes an infallible Church to prescribe such a fallible rule of interpreting Scriptures? If they expounded Scripture according to their own reason and judgment, as it is plain they did; then their authority is no more sacred than their reason is; and those are the best expositors, whether ancient or modern, whose expositions are backed with the best reasons. We think it a great confirmation of our faith, that the Fathers of the Church, in the first and best ages, did believe the same doctrines, and expound Scripture in great and concerning points, much to the same sense that we do; and therefore we refuse not to appeal to them, but yet we do not wholly build our faith upon the authority of the Fathers; we forsake them where they forsake the Scriptures, or put perverse senses on them; and so does the Church of Rome too, after all their boast of the Fathers, when they contradict the present Roman Catholic faith, as they do very often, though I believe without any malicious design, because they knew nothing of it.

However, ask them once more, whether that sense which they give of those texts of Scripture, which are controverted between us and the Church of Rome, be confirmed by the unanimous consent of all the ancient Fathers: whether, for

instance, all the ancient Fathers did expound those texts, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church," and "feed my sheep," &c. of the personal supremacy and infallibility of Peter and his successors the bishops of Rome? Whether they all expounded those words, "This is my body," of the transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine into the natural flesh and blood of Christ? And those words, "Drink ye all of this," to signify, let none drink of the cup, but the priest who consecrates? And so in other Scriptures. If they have the confidence to say, that all the Fathers expounded these and such like Scriptures, as the doctors of the Church of Rome now do, tell them, you have heard and seen other expositions of such Scriptures cited from the ancient Fathers by our Divines, and that you will refer that cause to them, and have it tried whenever they please.

III. There is no other way then left of understanding Scripture, but to expound it as we do other writings; by considering the signification and propriety of words and phrases, the scope and context of the place, the reasons of things, the analogy between the Old and New Testament, and the like: when they dispute with Protestants, they can reasonably pretend to no other way of expounding Scripture, because we admit of no others; and yet if they allow of this, they open a wide gap for all heresies to come into the Church; they give up the authority of the Church, and make every man his own pope, and expose themselves to all the senseless raillery of their admired *Pax Vobis*. By this they confess, that the Scripture may be understood by reason, that they can back their interpretations with such powerful arguments, as are able to convince heretics, who reject the authority of an infallible interpreter: and then they may unsay all their hard sayings against the Scriptures, that "they are dark and obscure dead letters, unsensed characters, mere figured ink and paper;" they must recant all their raillery against expounding Scripture by a private spirit, and allowing every man to judge of the sense of it, and to choose what he pleases: for thus they do themselves, when they dispute with heretics about the sense of Scripture; and I am pretty confident, they would never speak against Scripture, nor a private spirit more, if this private spirit would but make us converts; but the mischief is, a private spirit, if it have any tincture of sense and reason, seldom expounds Scripture to a Roman Catholic sense.

So that in truth, it is a vain, nay, a dangerous thing for

Papists to dispute with Protestants about the sense of Scripture ; for it betrays the cause of the Church, and vindicates the Scriptures, and every man's natural right of judging from the usurpations and encroachments of a pretended infallibility ; but yet dispute they do, and attempt to prove their doctrines from Scripture. And because it is too large a task for this present undertaking, to examine all their Scripture proofs, I shall only observe some general faults they are guilty of, which whoever is aware of, is in no danger of being imposed on by their pretences to Scripture : and I shall not industriously multiply particulars, for there are some few palpable mistakes, which run through most of their Scripture proofs.

1. As first, many of their Scripture proofs are founded upon the likeness of a word or phrase, without any regard to the sense and signification of that word in Scripture, or to the matter to which it is applied ; as for instance, there is not a more useful doctrine to the Church of Rome, than that of unwritten traditions, which are of equal authority with the Scriptures ; for were this owned, they might put what novel doctrines they pleased upon us, under the venerable name of ancient and unwritten traditions. Well, we deny that there are any such unwritten traditions, which are of equal authority with the Scripture, since the canon of Scripture was written and perfected, and desire them to prove that there are any such unwritten traditions. Now they think it sufficient to do this, if they can but find the word tradition in Scripture ; and that we confess they do in several places : for tradition signifies only the delivery of the doctrine of the Gospel, which we grant was not done perfectly in writing, when those epistles were written, which speak of traditions, by word, as well as by epistle.* But because the whole doctrine of the Gospel was not written at first, but delivered by word of mouth, does it hence follow, that after the Gospel is written, there are still unwritten traditions of equal authority with the Scripture ? This is what they should prove ; and the mere naming of traditions in Scripture, before the canon was perfected, does not prove this : for all men know, that the Gospel was delivered by word of mouth, or by unwritten tradition, before it was written ; but this does by no means prove, that there are unwritten traditions, after the Gospel was written. To prove this, they should shew us where it is said, that there are some

* 1 Thess. ii. 15.

traditions that shall never be written, that the rule of faith shall always consist partly of written, partly of unwritten traditions.

Thus we know how zealous the Church of Rome is for their purgatory fire, wherein all men, who are in a state of grace, or delivered from the guilt of their sins, must yet undergo that punishment of them, which has not been satisfied for by other means. As profitable a doctrine as any the Church of Rome has, because it gives great authority to sacerdotal absolution, and sets a good price upon masses for the dead, and indulgences : and yet the best proof they have for this is that fire mentioned 1 Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15 : "Every man's work shall be made manifest : for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall declare every man's work of what sort it is.—If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss : but he himself shall be saved, but so as by fire." Now here is mention of fire indeed ; but how does it appear to be the Popish purgatory ? Suppose it were meant of a material fire, though that does not seem so proper to try good or bad actions, a true and orthodox or heretical faith, yet this fire is not kindled till the day of judgment, which is eminently in Scripture called the day, and is the only day we know of in Scripture, which shall be revealed by fire, when the "Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire," 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. So that here is nothing but the word fire, applied to another fire, than St. Paul ever thought on, to prove a Popish purgatory.

Thus they make confession to a priest ordinarily necessary to obtain the forgiveness of our sins ; and have no better Scripture proofs for it, but that we are often commanded to confess our sins, sometimes to God, and sometimes to one another, but never to a priest.

They have made a sacrament of extreme unction, wherein the sick person is anointed for the forgiveness of sins ; and though a sacrament ought to have the most plain and express institution, both as to the matter and form, and use, and end of it, yet the only proofs they produce for this, is the disciples working miraculous cures by anointing the sick with oil, Mark vi. 13, which methinks is a little different from the sacrament of extreme unction, which is not to cure their sickness, but to forgive their sins ; and St. James's command,* "Is any sick

* James v. 14, 15.

among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Where anointing with oil, joined with fervent prayer, is prescribed as a means of restoring the sick person to health again; and therefore is not the Popish extreme unction, which is to be administered only to those who are dying: and though St. James adds, "And if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him:" yet, 1. This is not said to be the effect of anointing, but of the fervent prayer: and 2, This very forgiveness of sins does not refer to a plenary pardon of sins in the other world, but signifies the removal of the visible and sensible punishments of sin, in restoring the sick person to health again. That though such sickness was inflicted on him for his sins, and possibly were the effects of Church censures, which in those days were confirmed and ratified by bodily punishments, yet upon his reconciliation to the Church, and the prayers of the elders, and the ceremony of anointing, he should be restored to health again, which was an external and visible remission of his sins, and should be a plenary pardon, if he brought forth the true and genuine fruits of repentance: this is very natural, and very agreeable to the scope and design of the text, and differs as much from the Popish extreme unction, as their greatest adversaries could wish. Such kind of proofs as these are merely the work of fancy and imagination, and can impose upon no man who will but attend to the different use and signification of words.

2. Another grand fault our Roman adversaries are guilty of is, that their Scripture proofs are always very lame and imperfect, that is, that they never prove their whole doctrine from Scripture, but only some little part of it: they draw very fine and artificial schemes, and if they can find some little appearance in Scripture to countenance any one part of it, they take that for a proof of the whole. As for instance:

Thus they tell us, that Christ made Peter the prince of the Apostles, and the head of the universal Church, his own vicar upon earth; and that the bishops of Rome, who are St. Peter's successors, succeed not only to his chair, but to all the rights and prerogatives of St. Peter; and therefore the Bishop of Rome, also is the Head of the Church, the Œcumenical pastor, who neither wants St. Peter's keys or sword. This is a very notable point, if it were well proved; but, as I observed before,

this being a matter of pure institution, which depends wholly upon the will of God, it can be proved only by Scripture : how much then of this do they pretend to prove from Scripture ? Why, they will prove by Scripture, that St. Peter was the prince of the Apostles, because Christ said unto him, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church : " and "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; " and "Feed my sheep ; " which indeed are lamentable proofs, for the same power was given to all the Apostles ; John xx. 21, 22, 23, "Then said Jesus unto them, Peace be unto you: as my Father sent me, even so I send you," all of you ; and therefore not one in subjection to another, but all with equal power : "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost ; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." Accordingly, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost fell on them all, they were all endowed with the gift of tongues, and miracles, and prophecy ; they all had the same infallible Spirit, and therefore needed no superior head over them : they were to be separated into all parts of the world, where they could have no communication with each other, and therefore could have no universal head. The history of the Acts of the Apostles gives not the least intimation of any such superiority, which either St. Peter challenged, or the other Apostles paid him ; which are strong presumptions against such a supremacy of St. Peter : and I suppose they themselves will grant, that all the rest of the Apostles were as infallible as he.

But suppose that we should grant them, that St. Peter was the chief of the Apostles, and had a kind of primacy, not of government, but order, how do they prove from Scripture that the bishop of Rome succeeds in all the rights and prerogatives of St. Peter ? For unless this be proved, whatever prerogative St. Peter had, it signifies nothing to them : and yet this cannot be proved, but by institution ; for though Christ had bestowed a primacy on St. Peter, yet unless he expressly grant it to his successors too, nay, to his successors in the see of Rome, his primacy as being a personal prerogative, must die with his person : as a prince may grant a priority to persons in the same office and power, may make a first colonel, or a first captain ; but if these men to whom the presidency is given, die, or are removed, those who succeed in their office and

power, to the same regiment or company, do not therefore succeed to their priority too ; for this did not belong to their office, but to their persons, and the king may give the priority again to whom he pleases, or appoint them to succeed in course, according to their admission into such offices. And by the same reason, the primacy of the Roman bishops, who are St. Peter's successors, does not follow from the primacy of St. Peter, unless they can shew that Christ has given them the primacy also, as well as St. Peter ; and this must be proved from Scripture, because it is matter of institution, and no argument in the world can prove any thing, which depends solely upon an institution, without proving the institution : but this the Roman doctors never pretend to ; for they know, that there is not one word in Scripture about it ; and nothing but the authority of Scripture can prove a divine institution. So that could they prove the primacy of St. Peter from Scripture, they prove but half their point, and that the most inconsiderable half too, for it does them no good. And therefore when they make a great noise about St. Peter's primacy and prerogatives, never trouble yourselves to dispute that point with them, which is nothing to the purpose ; but to require them to prove from Scripture, that the bishop of Rome, as St. Peter's successor, is appointed by Christ to be the supreme œcumenical bishop, and the prince of all bishops. And if you stick here, as in reason you ought, there is an end of that controversy.

Thus there is nothing the Church of Rome makes a greater noise about, than infallibility, though they are not agreed where to place this infallibility, whether in the Pope, or a General Council : but let it be where it will, this being a matter of institution, must be proved by Scripture: how then in the first place do they prove the Pope to be infallible ? That they think is very plain, because Christ says, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." But how does this prove, that the bishop of Rome is infallible ? for here is not a word of the bishop of Rome. Yes, this proves St. Peter to be infallible, who was afterwards bishop of Rome, and therefore all his successors are infallible too. Now that St. Peter was infallible, as all the other Apostles were, we readily grant ; though, I think, this text does not prove it : but does this prove the bishop of Rome's infallibility ? Just as St. Peter's primacy proves the Pope to be the œcumenical primate : they them-

selves must grant, that an infallible Apostle may have a fallible bishop for his successor ; or else they must either deny, that the rest of the Apostles, as well as St. Peter, were infallible, or they must grant, that all the Apostles' successors, that is, all the bishops who succeeded any of the Apostles in their sees, must be as infallible as the bishops of Rome, who succeeded St. Peter ; and then there will be so much infallibility, that it will be worth nothing : if then there be not a natural and necessary entail of infallibility upon the successors of infallible Apostles, they must shew us an express institution, which makes the successors of Peter at Rome infallible. And let our Protestant demand this, before he owns the infallibility of the Pope of Rome, and then, I believe, they will not think him worth converting.

Thus as for those who place infallibility in a General Council, demand a Scripture proof of it, that they would produce the General Council's charter for infallibility : this they cannot do ; but they say the Church is infallible, and the General Council is the Church representative, and therefore a General Council must be infallible too. So that here are several things for them to prove, and to prove by Scripture too ; for there is no other way of proving them, before they can prove the infallibility of General Councils : as, 1. That the Church is infallible. 2. That a General Council is the Church representative. 3. That the Church representative is that Church to which the promise of infallibility is made. And then they might conclude, that a General Council, as being the Church representative, is infallible. Now instead of proving every particular of this by Scripture (as they must do, if they will prove by Scripture, that General Councils are infallible), they pretend to prove no more than the first of the three, that the Church is infallible ; and that very lamely too, as may appear more hereafter : and then they take all the rest for granted, without any proof : which is just as if a man, who in order to prove his title to an estate, is required to prove, that this estate did anciently belong to his family, that it was entailed upon the heir male, that this entail was never cut off, nor the estate legally alienated, and that he alone is the true surviving heir ; should think it enough to prove only the first of these, that the estate did anciently belong to his family ; which it might have done and yet not belong to it now, or if it did still belong to it, he may not be the true heir.

Thus if we consider what it is they teach about purgatory,

we shall quickly perceive, how little it is, they pretend to prove of it: they tell us, that there is a purgatory fire, after this life, where men undergo the punishment of their sins, when the fault is pardoned: that the Church has power out of her stocks of merits, which consists of the supererogating works of great and eminent saints, to grant pardons and indulgences to men while they live, to deliver them from several thousand years punishment, which is due to their sins in purgatory; that the souls in purgatory may be released out of it by the prayers, and alms, and masses of the living; which is the very life and soul of this doctrine of purgatory. Now of all this, they pretend to prove no more from Scripture, but that there is a purgatory fire after this life; and how they prove it, you have already heard: but that either penances or pilgrimages, and other extraordinary acts of devotion, while we live, or the Pope's pardon and indulgences, can either remit or shorten the pains of purgatory; or that the prayers and alms of our living friends, or masses said for us by mercenary priests, can deliver us out of purgatory, which we are principally concerned to know, and without which, purgatory will not enrich the priests nor the Church; this they never attempt, that I know of, to prove by Scripture: whether there be a purgatory or not, in itself considered, is a mere speculative point, and of no value: but could they prove, that the Pope has the keys of purgatory, and that alms and masses will deliver out of purgatory; this were worth knowing, and is as well worth proving, as any doctrine of the Church of Rome; for there is nothing they can get more by. But if you will not believe this, until they produce a Scripture proof of it, you may let them dispute on about the place of purgatory, and keep your money in your pocket. Thus it is in most other cases, if you take their whole doctrine together, and demand a proof of every part of it, and not take a proof of some little branch of it for a proof of the whole, you will quickly find, that they will not be so fond of disputing, as some of them now are.

3. Another way our Roman adversaries have of proving their doctrines from Scriptures is, instead of plain and positive proofs, to produce some very remote and inevident consequences from Scripture; and if they can but hale a text of Scripture into the premises, whatever the conclusion be, they call it a Scripture proof. There are infinite instances of this, but I can only name some few.

Thus they prove the perpetual infallibility of the Church,

because Christ promises his disciples to be with them "to the end of the world," Matth. xxviii. 20 ; which promise cannot be confined to their persons, for they were to die long before the end of the world, and therefore must extend to their successors. Suppose that, and does Christ's being with them, necessarily signify that he will make them infallible? Is not Christ with every particular Church, with every particular bishop, nay, with every particular good Christian, and must they all be infallible then?

Thus Christ promises that the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Church; *ergo*, the Church is infallible; for if error and heresy prevail against the Church, the gates of hell prevail against it: and I add, if sin and wickedness prevail against the Church, the gates of hell prevail against it; *ergo*, the Church is impeccable, and cannot sin; which is to the full as good a consequence as the other: and therefore the gates of hell prevailing, can neither signify the mere prevalency of errors or sin in the Church, but such a prevalency as destroys the Church; and this shall never be, because Christ has promised it shall never be; and it may never be, though the Church be not infallible; and therefore this does not prove infallibility.

Thus they prove there is such a place as purgatory, where sins are forgiven and expiated, because our Saviour says, that the sin against the Holy Ghost, shall neither be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come, Matth. xii. 32; and therefore there are some sins which are forgiven in the next world, because there is a sin which shall not be forgiven there. Now not to consider the ordinary use of such phrases to signify no more, than it shall never be, without distinguishing between what is to be done in this world, and what in the next; nay, not to consider how contrary this is to their own doctrine of purgatory, that men who go to purgatory have all their sins already forgiven, though they must suffer the punishment of them there; which, how absurd soever it is, yet shews, that purgatory is not a place of forgiving sins; and therefore cannot be meant by our Saviour in those words: yet supposing all they would have, that there shall be some sins forgiven in the next world, which are not forgiven in this; how does this prove a Popish purgatory, where souls endure such torments as are not inferior to those of hell itself, excepting their duration? That some sins shall be forgiven in the next world, I think, does not very evidently prove, that men shall be tormented, it may be for several ages, in the fire of purgatory.

Thus they prove the necessity of auricular confession to a priest, from the power of judicial absolution. Christ has given the priest power to forgive sins, and hereby has made him a judge, to retain or remit sins, to absolve and inflict penances. Now a judge cannot judge right, without a particular knowledge of the fact, and all the circumstances of it ; and this the priest cannot know, without the confession of the penitent : and therefore, as priests have authority to absolve, so a penitent, who would be absolved, must of necessity confess. But now I should think it a much better consequence, that the priest has not such a judicial authority of absolution, as requires a particular confession of the penitent, because Christ has nowhere commanded all men to confess their sins to a priest, than that the priest has such a judicial authority, and therefore all men must confess to a priest : for though our Saviour does give power to his Apostles to remit and retain sins, yet those words do not necessarily signify a judicial authority to forgive sins ; or if they did, it may relate only to public sins, which are too well known without a private confession ; or however, it is not the particular knowledge of the sin, with all the circumstances of it, but the marks and characters of true repentance for public or secret sins, which the best rule and direction whom to absolve ; and therefore there is no need of a particular confession to this purpose.

But the sophistry of this is most palpable, when they draw such consequences from one text of Scripture, as directly contradict other plain and express texts. Thus because St. Peter tells us, that there are many things hard to be understood, in St. Paul's epistles, "which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction," 2 Peter iii. 16. From hence they would conclude, that people ought not to be allowed to read the Bible : as if St. Peter had intended to forbid them to read those epistles, which St. Paul had written to them ; nay, to read this very epistle which he himself now sent to them. For these epistles which were sent to the Churches, that they might be read by them, make a considerable part of the New Testament, which the people must not be allowed to read now. But setting aside this, this consequence that the people must not read the Bible, is directly contrary to a great many other texts, which expressly command them to read, and search, and study, and meditate on the laws of God, and the holy Scriptures, as every body knows. I confess it amazes me to hear

men argue at this rate : when they cannot produce any one text which forbids people to read the Scriptures, and there are a great many express commands that they should read the Scriptures, they think it sufficient to oppose against all this authority, a consequence of their own making, and a very absurd one too, and call this a Scripture proof.

I would not be thought wholly to reject a plain and evident consequence from Scripture ; but yet I will never admit of a mere consequence to prove an institution, which must be delivered in plain terms, as all laws ought to be ; and where I have no other proof, but some Scripture consequences, I shall not think it equivalent to a Scripture proof : if the consequence be plain and obvious, and such as every man sees, I shall not question it ; but remote, and dubious, and disputed consequences, if we have no better evidence, to be sure are a very ill foundation for articles of faith. Let our Protestant then tell such disputants, that for the institution of sacraments, and for articles of faith, he expects plain positive proofs : that as much as the Protestant faith is charged with uncertainty, we desire a little more certainty for our faith than mere inferences from Scripture, and those none of the plainest neither.

4. Another false pretence to Scripture proofs is, to clap their own sense upon the words of Scripture, without any regard to the use and propriety of words, to the circumstances of the place ; to the reason and nature of things ; and to call this a Scripture proof of their doctrine, when their doctrines do not naturally grow there, but are only engrafted by some cunning artists, upon a Scripture stock. I shall give you only one instance of this, their doctrine of transubstantiation.

As for transubstantiation, they teach, that the elements of bread and wine are converted into the natural flesh and blood of Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary : that after consecration there is nothing of the substance of bread and wine, but the accidents subsist without a substance : that the natural body of Christ, his soul and divinity, are present under the species of bread ; nay, that whole Christ, flesh and blood, is under the species of bread, and in every particle of it, and under the species of wine, and every drop of it : that the body of Christ is not broken, nor his blood shed in the sacrament, but only the species of bread and wine, which are nothing : that it is only this nothing which we eat and drink in the sacrament, and which goes down into our stomachs, and carries whole Christ down with it. Now this doctrine sounds so very

harsh, is so contrary to all the evidence of our senses, and has so many absurdities and contradictions to reason, that it ought to be very plainly proved from Scripture in every part of it : for if a man might be persuaded to renounce his senses and reason to believe Scripture, yet it ought to be equally evident to him at least, that Scripture is for it, as it is, that sense and reason is against it : and yet there is not one word in Scripture to prove any one part of this doctrine of transubstantiation ; neither that the natural flesh and blood of Christ is in the sacrament, nor that the substance of bread and wine does not remain after consecration, nor that the accidents of bread and wine, such as colour, smell, taste, quantity, weight, subsist without any substance or subject to subsist in. These are such paradoxes to sense and reason, that they ought to be very well supported with Scripture, before they are received for articles of faith, or else our faith will be as very an accident, without any substance, as the sacramental species themselves are. But though they have no text which proves the least tittle of all this, yet they have a text whereon they graft this doctrine of transubstantiation, *viz.* “This is my body,” which they say, signifies every thing which they teach concerning transubstantiation ; but then I hope they will prove that it does so, not expect that we should take it for granted, because they say it. Now, not to insist upon those arguments, whereby our divines have so demonstratively proved, that transubstantiation, as explained by the Church of Rome, cannot be the sense of “This is my body,” my advice to Protestants is, to put them upon the proof, that this is the sense of it, which in reason they ought to prove, because there is not one word of it in the text ; and I shall only tell them what proofs they ought to demand for it.

Now I suppose all men will think it reasonable, that the evidence for it, should at least be equal to the evidence against it, though we ought indeed to have more reason to believe it, than to disbelieve it ; or else we must hang in suspense, when the balance is equal, and turns neither way. Now I will not oppose the evidence of sense and reason, against the authority of Scripture ; for I will never suppose that they can contradict each other : and if there should appear some contradiction between them, I will be contented at present, without disputing that point, to give it on the side of Scripture ; but I will oppose the evidence of sense and reason against any private man's, or any Church's exposition of Scripture : and if that

exposition they give of any text of Scripture, as suppose, "This is my body," contradict the evidence of sense and reason, I may modestly require as plain proof, that this is the meaning of the text, as I have, that such a meaning is contrary to all sense and reason : for though sense and reason be not the rule and measure of faith, yet we must use our sense and reason in expounding Scripture, or we may quickly make a very absurd and senseless religion.

Now this shews us what kind of proof we must require, that transubstantiation is the doctrine of the Gospel, *viz.* as certain proof as we have, that transubstantiation is contrary to sense and reason. And therefore,

1. We must demand a self-evident proof of this, because it is self-evident, that transubstantiation contradicts sense and reason. Every man, who knows what the word means (which I believe men may do, without being great philosophers), and will consult his own senses and reason, will need no arguments to prove, that transubstantiation contradicts both. Now such a Scripture proof I would see for transubstantiation, so plain, and express, and self-evident, that no man, who understands the words, can doubt whether this be the meaning of them ; I mean, a reasonable, not an obstinate, wilful, and sceptical doubting. Now I believe, that our adversaries themselves will not say, that "This is my body," is such a self-evident proof of transubstantiation ; I am sure some of the wisest men among them have not thought it so, and the fierce disputes, for so many ages, about the interpretation of those words, proves that it is not so : for men do not use to dispute what is self-evident, and proves itself without any other arguments. Now it is very unreasonable to require any man to believe transubstantiation against a self-evident proof, that it is contrary to sense and reason, without giving him a self-evident proof, that it is the doctrine of Scripture ; which is to require a man to believe against the best reason and evidence.

2. We must demand such a Scripture proof of transubstantiation, as cannot possibly signify anything else ; or else it will not answer that evidence which we have against transubstantiation. For sense and reason pronounce transubstantiation to be naturally impossible ; and therefore unless it be as impossible to put any other sense upon Scripture than what signifies transubstantiation, as it is to reconcile transubstantiation to sense and reason, there is no such good evidence for transubstantiation, as against it. Were the Scripture proofs for

transubstantiation so plain and evident, that it were impossible to put any other sense on the words, then I would grant, that it is as impossible for those who believe the Scriptures, to disbelieve transubstantiation, as it is for those, who trust to their own sense and reason, to believe it. Here the difficulty would be equal on both sides, and then I should prefer a divine revelation (if it were possible to prove such a revelation to be divine), before natural sense and reason; but I presume, no man will say, that it is impossible to put another, and that a very reasonable, interpretation upon those words, "This is my body," without expounding them to the sense of transubstantiation.

Our Roman adversaries do not deny, but that these words are capable of a figurative, as well as of a literal sense; as when the Church is called the body of Christ, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, it is not meant of his natural, but his mystical body; and thus, when the bread is called the body of Christ, it may not signify his natural, but sacramental body, or his body to all the ends and purposes of a sacrament. Now if there be any other good sense to be made of these words, besides transubstantiation, there cannot be such a necessity to expound them of transubstantiation, as there is not to expound them of it; for I do not reject Scripture, if I deny transubstantiation, when the words of Scripture do not necessarily prove it; but I renounce sense and reason, if I believe it. Now, though I were bound to renounce my sense and reason, when they contradict Scripture, yet sure I am not bound to deny my sense and reason, when they do not contradict Scripture; and sense and reason are never contrary to Scripture, nor Scripture to them, when the words of Scripture are capable of such an interpretation as is reconcilable both to sense and reason: in such a case, to expound Scripture contrary to sense and reason, is both to pervert the Scripture, and to contradict reason, without any necessity. An unlearned man need not enter into a large dispute about transubstantiation; let him but require his adversary to give him as plain evidence, that transubstantiation is the doctrine of the Gospel, as he can give him, that it is contrary to sense and reason, and the dispute will quickly be at an end. It had been very easy to have given more instances under every head, and to have observed more false ways of expounding Scripture, which the doctors of the Church of Rome are guilty of; but these are the most obvious, and therefore the best fitted to my design to

instruct unlearned men ; and I must not suffer this discourse, which was at first intended much shorter than it already is, to swell too much under my hands.

SECT. III.

Concerning the ancient Fathers, and Writers, of the Christian Church.

THOUGH learned men may squabble about the sense of the Fathers and Councils, it is very unreasonable that unlearned men should be concerned in such disputes, because they are not competent judges of them ; and yet there is nothing which our Roman disputants make a greater noise with, among women and children, and the meanest sort of people, than quotations out of Fathers and Councils, whom they pretend to be all on their side. Now as it is a ridiculous thing for them to talk of Fathers and Councils to such people, so it is very ridiculous for such people to be converted by sayings out of the Fathers and Councils : I confess, it has made me often smile, with a mixture of pity and indignation, at the folly of it ; for what more contemptible easiness can any man be guilty of, than to change his religion which he has been taught out of the Scriptures, and may find there, if he pleases, because he is told by some honest priest (a sort of men who never deceive any one), that such or such a Father, who lived it may be they know not where nor when, and wrote they know not what, has spoke in favour of transubstantiation or purgatory, or some other Popish doctrine.

And therefore let me advise our Protestant, who is not skilled in these matters, when he is urged with the authority of Fathers, to ask them some few questions.

1. Ask them, how you shall certainly know what the judgment of the Fathers was ? And this includes a great many questions, which must be resolved, before you can be sure of this ; as, how you shall know that such books were written by that Father, whose name they bear ? Or that they have not been corrupted by the ignorance or knavery of transcribers, while they were in the hands of monks, who usurped great authority over the Fathers, and did not only pare their nails, but altered their very habit and dress, to fit them to the modes of the times, and make them fashionable ? How you shall know what the true meaning of those words are, which they

cite from them? which the words themselves many times will not discover, without the context. How you shall know that such sayings are honestly quoted, or honestly translated? How you shall know whether this Father did not, in other places, contradict what he here says? Or did not alter his opinion after he had wrote it, without writing public recantations, as St. Austin did? Whether this Father was not contradicted by other Fathers? And in that case, which of the Fathers you must believe?

You may add, that you do not ask these questions at random, but for great and necessary reasons: for in reading some late English books, both of Protestants and Papists, you find large quotations out of the Fathers on both sides; that some are charged with false translations, with perverting the Father's sense, with misciting his words, with quoting spurious authors, as it seems many of those are, which make up the late *Speculum*, or *Ecclesiastical Prospective-glass*; to name no more. Now how shall you, who are an unlearned man, judge of such disputes as these? What books are spurious or genuine? Whether the Fathers be rightly quoted? And what the true sense of them is? For my part, I know not what answer such a disputant could make, but to blush, and to promise not to allege the authority of Fathers any more. It is certain, in such matters, those who are unlearned, must trust the learned; and then, I suppose, an unlearned Protestant will rather trust a Protestant than a Popish doctor, as Papists will rather trust their priests than Protestant divines; and then there is not much to be got on either side, this way: for when a Protestant shews an inclination rather to believe a Popish than a Protestant divine, he is certainly three-quarters a Papist beforehand.

Indeed unlearned Protestants, who are inquisitive, and have time to read, have such advantages now to satisfy themselves, even about the sense of Fathers and Councils, as may be no age before ever afforded: there being so many excellent books written in English, as plainly confirm the Protestant faith, and confute Popery, by the testimonies and authorities of ancient writers; and such men, though they do not understand Latin and Greek, are in no danger of all the learning of their Popish adversaries: and any man who pleases, may have recourse to such books, and see the state of the controversy with his own eyes, and judge for himself; but those who cannot do this, may very fairly decline such a trial, as improper for them. For,

2. Let our Protestant ask such disputers, whether a plain

man may not attain a sufficient knowledge and certainty of his religion, without understanding Fathers and Councils? If they say he cannot, ask them how many Roman Catholics there are, that understand Fathers and Councils? Ask them, how those Christians understood their religion, who lived before there were any of these Fathers and Councils? Ask them again, whether they believe that God has made it impossible to the greatest part of mankind, to understand the Christian religion? For even among Christians themselves, there is not one in an hundred thousand, who understands Fathers and Councils, and it is morally impossible they should: and therefore certainly there must be a shorter and easier way to understand Christian religion than this, or else the generality of mankind, even of profest Christians, are out of all possibility of salvation. Ask them once more, whether it be not a much easier matter for a plain honest man to learn all things necessary to salvation, out of the Scriptures themselves, especially with the help of a wise and learned guide, than to understand all Fathers and Councils, and take his religion from them? Why then do they so quarrel at people's reading the Scriptures, and put them upon reading Fathers and Councils? I suppose they will grant, the Scriptures may be read a little sooner than so many voluminous Fathers, and Labbe's Councils into the bargain; and, I believe, most men who try, will think that they are more easily understood; and therefore, if Protestants, as they pretend, can have no certainty of the true sense of Scripture, I am sure there is much less certainty to be had of the Fathers: a short time will give us a full view of the Scriptures; but to read and understand all the Fathers, is work enough for a man's life: the Scripture is all of a piece, every part of it agrees with the rest; the Fathers many times contradict themselves and each other: and if men differ about the sense of Scripture, they differ much more about Fathers and Councils. That it is a mighty riddle, that those who think ordinary Christians not fit to read the Scriptures, should think it necessary for them to understand Fathers and Councils; and yet they are ridiculous indeed to dispute with every tradesman about Fathers and Councils, if they do not think they ought to read and understand them.

The sum is, such Protestants as are not skilled in book learning, may very reasonably tell these men, who urge them with the authority of Councils and Fathers, that they do not pretend to any skill in such matters, and hope it is not required of

them; for if it be, they are in an ill case: the holy Scriptures, not Fathers and Councils, is the rule of their faith; if they had read the Fathers, they should believe them no farther, than what they taught was agreeable to Scripture; and therefore, whatever opinions any of the Fathers had, it is no concern of theirs to know, if they can learn what the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles was, without it: learned men may dispute about these things; and they have heard learned Protestants affirm, that the Church of Rome can find none of her peculiar doctrines in the writings of any of the Fathers for the first three hundred years; and it is certain, if this be true, all the later Fathers are of no authority to establish any new doctrine; for there was no more authority in the Church, to bring in any new doctrines, after three hundred years, than there is at this day.

Unlearned men may very honourably reject all dispute about Fathers and Councils (though learned men cannot, and indeed need not); for if they are not bound to read Fathers and Councils, I think they are not bound to understand them, nor to dispute about them; and it is very unadvisedly done, when they do: for it is past a jest in so serious a matter, though otherwise it were comical enough, for men to be converted by Fathers and Councils, without understanding them.

CHAP. III.

HOW TO ANSWER SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR PRETENCES
URGED BY PAPISTS AGAINST PROTESTANTS.

SECT. I.

1. *Concerning the Uncertainty of the Protestant Faith.*

OUR Popish adversaries of late, have not so much disputed, as fenced; have neither downright opposed the Protestant faith, nor vindicated their own, but have betaken themselves to some tricks and amusements, to divert and perplex the dispute, and to impose upon the ignorant and unwary. One of their principal arts has been, to cry out of the uncertainty of the Protestant faith. This every body is nearly concerned in; for there is nothing wherein certainty is so necessary, and so much desired, as in matters of religion, whereon our eternal state depends. This has been often

answered by Protestants, and I do not intend to enter into the merits of the cause, and shew upon what a firm and sure bottom the Protestant faith stands: this is a cavil easily enough exposed to the scorn and contempt of all considering men, without so much trouble.

For, 1. Suppose the Protestant faith were uncertain, how is the cause of the Church of Rome ever the better? Is this a sufficient reason to turn Papists, because Protestants are uncertain? Does this prove the Church of Rome to be infallible, because the Church of England is fallible? Must certainty necessarily be found among them, because it is not to be found with us? Is Thomas an honest man because John is a knave? These are two distinct questions, and must be distinctly proved. If they can prove our faith uncertain, and their own certain, there is reason then to go over to them; but if they cannot do this, they may, it may be, persuade men to renounce the Protestant faith, but not to embrace Popery. Ask them then, what greater assurance they have of their faith, than we have of ours? If they tell you, their Church is infallible; tell them, that is another question, and does not belong to this dispute. For the infallibility of their Church does not follow from the uncertainty of our faith; if they can prove their Church infallible, whether they prove our faith uncertain or not, we will at any time change Protestant certainty for infallibility: and if they could prove our faith uncertain, unless they could prove their own more certain (though we bate them infallibility), we may cease to be Protestants, but shall never turn Papists.

2. Ask them, what they mean by the uncertainty of the Protestant faith? For this may signify two things: either, 1. That the objects of our faith are in themselves uncertain, and cannot be proved by certain reasons: or, 2ndly, That our persuasion about these matters, is uncertain and wavering. If they mean the first, then the sense is, that the Christian religion is an uncertain thing, and cannot be certainly proved; for this is the old Protestant faith: we believe the Apostles' Creed, and whatever is contained in the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles, and this is all we believe: and I hope, they will not say these things are uncertain; for then they renounce the Christian religion, and infallibility itself cannot help them out: for infallibility cannot make that certain, which is in itself uncertain: an infallible man must know things as they are, or else he is mistaken, and ceases to be in-

fallible ; and therefore what is certain, he infallibly knows to be certain, and what is uncertain, he infallibly knows to be uncertain : for the most certain and infallible knowledge does not change its object, but sees it just as it is : and therefore they must allow the objects of our faith, or the Protestant faith, as to the matter of it, to be very certain, and built upon certain reason, or else their infallible Church can have no certainty of the Christian faith.

If they mean the second thing, that we have no certain persuasion about what we profess to believe : this is a great abuse to Protestants, as if we were all knaves and hypocrites, who do not heartily and firmly believe what we profess to believe : and a Protestant, who knows that he does very firmly and stedfastly believe his religion, ought to reject such a villanous accusation as this, with indignation and scorn. Indeed it is both impudent and silly for any man to tell a Protestant, that his faith is uncertain (as that signifies an uncertain and doubtful persuasion), when he knows and feels the contrary ; and nobody else can know this but himself : in what notion then is the Protestant faith uncertain ? What can faith signify, but either the objects of faith, or the internal assent and persuasion ? The objects of our faith are certain, if Christian religion be so, that is, they have very certain evidence : our assent and persuasion is very certain, as that is opposed to all doubtfulness and wavering : and what certainty then is wanting to the Protestant faith ?

When then you hear any of these men declaiming about the uncertainty of the Protestant faith, only ask them, what they mean by the Protestant faith ? Whether the articles of your faith, that they are uncertain ; or the act of faith, your internal assent and persuasion ? If they say, they mean the act of faith ; tell them, that it is a strange presumption in them to pretend to know your heart ; that you know that best yourself, whether you do firmly and stedfastly believe your religion ; and to give them satisfaction in that point, you assure them that you do. As for the objects of your faith, or what it is you believe, tell them, you are a member of the Church of England, and embrace the doctrine of it, and there they may find your faith both as a Christian and as a Protestant ; and may try their skill on it when they please, to prove any part of it uncertain, and you are ready to defend it. This is a plain and fair answer, and I believe you will hear no more of them.

For as for their common argument to prove the uncertainty of the Protestant faith, that there is a great variety of opinions amongst Protestants, and that they condemn one another with equal confidence and assurance : ask them, how this proves your faith to be uncertain, either as to its object, or as to its assent ? May not what you believe, be very certainly true, because some men believe the contrary ? Tell them, you do not place the certainty of what you believe, upon any man's believing, or not believing it, but upon the certain reasons you have to prove it ; and therefore if they would convince you, that what you believe is not certain, they must disprove your reasons, not merely tell you, that other men think it false or uncertain, and believe otherwise : thus does it prove, that you give an uncertain and doubtful assent to what you profess to believe, because other men are very fully persuaded of the contrary ? Pray tell them, that you do not build your assent upon other men's persuasions, but upon the reasons of your faith ; and while they are unshaken, you shall believe as you do, and with the same assurance, whoever believes otherwise.

There are two things indeed, which this argument proves, but they signify nothing to weaken the Protestant faith.

1. That all the doctrines which are professed by some Protestants, are not certain ; for some of them must be false, when they are contradictory doctrines maintained and professed by several sects of Protestants ; but then no man, that I know of, ever said, that all Protestant doctrines were certain ; which I hope does not hinder but that some Protestant doctrines may be certain ; and then the doctrines of the Church of England may be certain, though some other communions of Protestants have erred.

2. This argument proves also, that men who are mistaken, may be very confidently persuaded of their mistakes, and therefore the confidence of persuasion does not prove the certainty of their faith ; and I never heard any man say that it did : but I hope this does not prove that a man who is certain upon evident reasons, must be mistaken too, because men who are certain without reason may mistake.

And yet this very argument, from the different and contrary opinions among Protestants to prove the uncertainty of the Protestant faith, signifies nothing, as to our disputes with the Church of Rome : for ask them what they would think of the Protestant faith, were all Protestants of a mind ? Would their consent and agreement prove the certainty of the Protestant

faith? Then the Protestant faith, in opposition to Popery, is very certain: for they all agree in condemning the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome; and thus I think they get nothing by this argument: for if the dissensions of Protestants prove the uncertainty of their faith, as to such matters wherein they differ, then by the same rule their agreement in opposition to Popery, shews their great certainty in such matters: and this, I suppose, is no great inducement to a Protestant to turn Papist.

SECT. II.

Concerning Protestant misrepresentations of Popery.

THIS has been another late artifice of our Roman adversaries, to amuse ignorant people with a great noise of misrepresenting: that Protestant divines have painted Popery in such horrid shapes, as to disturb the imaginations of people, and to beget an incurable aversion in them against Popery, without understanding what it is. I shall not now dispute this matter over again: there has been so much of late said of it, and this pretence so shamefully baffled, in answer both to the Representer, and to Monsieur de Meaux's Exposition, that I am apt to think, they themselves could be very glad that it had never been mentioned, or could now be forgot; and therefore referring the inquisitive reader to those late books, wherein they will find this controversy fairly stated, I have some few things to add, which are plain and obvious to everybody; and that both with reference to the probability of this charge, and to the consequence of it.

First, As to the probability of this charge. Now, 1. Ask them, whether the first Reformers charged the Church of Rome with such doctrines and practices as they were not guilty of? We have not, that I know of, increased our charge against the Church of Rome in this age; if there has been any difference, we have rather been more favourable and candid in our censures of some of their doctrines, than the first Reformers were. Now is it likely, that the first Reformers should charge the Church of Rome wrongfully? No man can be a misrepresenter, but either out of ignorance or design; which of these then can we, with any probability, charge the first Reformers with?

As for ignorance, is it a probable thing, that Luther, Melancthon, Œcolampadius, Zuinglius, Bucer, Calvin, or to come

to our own English Reformers, that Archbishop Cranmer, and others, who had all been Papists themselves, should be ignorant what was taught and practised in the Church of Rome? It is now thought in this very cause, a very considerable proof, that Protestants do misrepresent Papists, because some Papists deny such doctrines and practices as Protestants charge them with; and, say they, can you think that Papists do not understand their own religion better than Protestants do? Now though this may be made a question, and I am very apt to think, that compare the learned and the unlearned Protestants and Papists together, there are more Protestants than Papists who understand Popery: and not only experience verifies this, but there is a plain reason why it should be so; because it is the principle of Protestants, that they must neither believe nor disbelieve anything without understanding it; but an implicit faith in the Church, governs the unlearned Papist, and many of those who should be learned too.

But let that be as it will, this argument signifies nothing to our first Reformers: for if Papists may be presumed to understand their own religion, the first Reformers, who were all educated in Popery, might be as well presumed to understand what Popery then was; and therefore there can be no reason to suspect that they misrepresented Popery out of ignorance.

Nor is it more probable, that they should misrepresent Popery out of interest and design: for if they were conscious to themselves, that Popery was not so bad as they represent it to be, why should they themselves have set up for Reformers? And what hope could they have, that at that time, when Popery was so well known, they should persuade the world to believe their misrepresentations?

Was it so desirable a thing for men to bring all the powers of the Church and court of Rome upon themselves, merely to gratify a misrepresenting humour? Do these men remember what our Reformers suffered, for opposing Popery? The loss of their estates, their liberties, their lives, all the vengeance of a blind and enraged zeal? And did they undergo all this with such constancy and Christian patience, only for the sake of telling lies, and raising scandalous reports of the Church of Rome? We think it a very good argument, that the Apostles and first preachers of Christianity were very honest men, and had no design to cheat the world, because they served no worldly interest by it; but cheerfully exposed themselves to all manner of sufferings in preaching the Gospel: and why

does not the same argument prove our first Reformers to be honest men, and then they could not be wilful misrepresenters?

Nay, if we will but allow them to have been cunning men (and it is evident they did not want wit), they would never have undertaken so hopeless a design, as to run down Popery merely by misrepresenting it; when, had their exceptions against Popery been only misrepresentations of their own, all the world could have confuted them: had the first Reformers been only misrepresenters, can we think, that they could have imposed upon such vast numbers of men, learned and unlearned, who knew and saw what Popery was? They were no fools themselves, and therefore could not hope to impose such a cheat upon the world.

2. Ask them again, How old this complaint is, of Protestant misrepresentations of Popery? How long it has been discovered, that Popery has been thus abused and misrepresented? Were the first Reformers charged with these misrepresentations by their adversaries in those days? Did they deny, that they gave religious worship to saints, and angels, and the Virgin Mary, to images and relics? Did they cry out of misrepresentations, when they were charged with such doctrines and practices as these? Or did they defend them, and endeavour to answer those arguments which the Reformers brought against them? And yet, methinks, if Popery had been so grossly misrepresented by the Reformers, this would as soon have been discovered by the learned Papists of those days, as by our late Representer; but it is most likely they did not then think Popery so much misrepresented, for if they had, they would certainly have complained of it: so that the high improbability of the thing, is a sufficient reason to unlearned Protestants, to reject this charge of Protestant misrepresentations of Popery, as nothing else than a Popish calumny against Protestants; and to conclude, that if Popery be misrepresented now, it is only by themselves, and that is the very truth of the case.

Secondly, Let us consider this charge of misrepresentations in the consequences of it, it would a little puzzle a man to guess, what service they intend to do the Church of Rome by it. For,

1. By complaining of such misrepresentations of Popery, they plainly confess, that those doctrines and practices, which we charge the Church of Rome with, are very bad, and fit to be rejected and abhorred of all Christians. This the Representer himself confesses, and is very copious and rhetorical upon it. Now this is of mighty dangerous conse-

quence; for if it appears, that we have not misrepresented them, that the doctrines and practices we charge them with, are truly the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, then, by their own confession, Popery is a very bad religion, and to be rejected by Christians; then there was a very just reason for our separation from the Church of Rome, and we are no longer either schismatics or heretics; and if the cause be put upon this issue, we need desire no better vindication of the Church of England: for if they cannot prove us heretics or schismatics, till they can prove us misrepresenters, I believe, we are pretty secure for this age.

2. These men who complain so much of misrepresenting, endeavour to make the doctrines of the Church of Rome, look as like Protestant doctrines, as possibly they can, as if there were little or no difference between them: now methinks this is no great reason for a Protestant to turn Papist, that the Popish faith is so much the better, the nearer it comes to the Protestant faith. The truth is, the chief mystery in this late trade of representing and misrepresenting, is no more but this, to join a Protestant faith with Popish practices; to believe as Protestants do, and to do as Papists do. As to give some few instances of this in the Papist Misrepresented and Represented.

“The Papist represented, believes it damnable to worship stocks and stones for gods, to pray to pictures or images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, or any other saints.” This is good Protestant doctrine: but then this Papist says his prayers before an image, kneels and bows before it, and pays all external acts of adoration to Christ and the saints, as represented by their images; though it is not properly the image he honours, but Christ and his saints by the images. Which is down-right Popery in practice.

Thus “he believes it is a most damnable idolatry, to make gods of men, either living or dead.” Which is the Protestant faith: but yet he prays to saints, and begs their intercession, without believing them to be gods, or his redeemers; which is Popery in practice.

“He believes it damnable, to think the Virgin Mary more powerful in heaven than Christ.” Which is Protestant doctrine: but yet he prays to her oftener than either to God or Christ, says ten Ave-maries for one Paternoster; which is a Popish devotion.

“He believes it unlawful to commit idolatry, and most damnable to worship any brea-den God.” Which is spoke like a Protestant; but yet he pays divine adoration to the sacrament, which is done like a Papist. And thus, in most of

those thirty-seven particulars of the double characters of a Papist Misrepresented, his great art is to reconcile a Protestant faith with Popish practices.

So that this new way of representing Popery is no reason to a Protestant to alter his faith, because, it seems, they believe in many things just as we do ; but, I think, it is a very great reason for a Papist to alter his practice, because a Protestant faith and Popish worship do not very well agree. Those who would not make gods of stocks and stones, of dead men and women, had certainly better not worship them, which is the most certain way not to make them gods ; and those who think it such damnable idolatry to worship a broaden god, in my opinion, are on the safer side not to worship the visible species of bread in the eucharist. Let but our Protestant observe this, that when they would represent Popery most favourably, they either say what Protestants do, or something as like it, as they can, and he will see no reason, either to change his faith or his practice.

PART II.

CHAP. IV.

SOME DIRECTIONS RELATING TO PARTICULAR CONTROVERSIES.

THOSE who would understand the particular disputes between us and the Church of Rome, must of necessity read such books as give the true state of the controversy between us, and fairly represent the arguments on both sides ; and where such books are to be met with, he may learn from a letter, entitled, "The present State of the Controversy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome : or, an account of books written on both sides." But my present design is of another nature, to give some plain and easy marks and characters of true Gospel doctrines ; whereby a man, who has any relish of the true spirit of Christianity, may as certainly know truth from error, in many cases, as the palate can distinguish tastes. There are some things so proper to the Gospel, and so primarily intended in it, that they may fitly serve for distinguishing marks of true evangelical doctrine : I shall name some of the chief, and examine some Popish doctrines by them.

SECT. I.

Concerning Idolatry.

1. ONE principal intention of the Gospel, was more perfectly to extirpate all idolatry : “ For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,”* that is, not only all sin and wickedness, but the very kingdom of darkness ; that kingdom which the devil had erected in the world, the very foundation of which was laid in idolatrous worship.

To this purpose, Christ has expressly taught us, that there is but one God, and has more perfectly instructed us in the nature of God : “ For no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”† Ignorance was the mother of Pagan idolatry, because they did not know the true God : they worshipped anything, everything, for a God ; and therefore the most effectual course to cure idolatry, was to make known the true God to the world : for those men are inexcusable, who know the true God, and worship anything else. Though indeed, according to some men’s divinity, the knowledge of the true God cures idolatry, not by rooting out idolatrous worship, but by excusing it ; by making that to be no idolatry in a Christian, who knows God, which was idolatry in a heathen, who did not know him : for if (as some say) none can be guilty of idolatry, who acknowledge one supreme Being ; then the heathens, when once they were instructed in the knowledge of the one true God, might have worshipped all their country gods, which they did before, without being guilty of idolatry ; which is, as if I should say, that man is a rebel, who, through mistake and ignorance, owns any man for his prince, who is not his prince ; but he is no rebel, who knows his lawful prince, and pays homage to another, whom he knows not to be his prince.

And therefore our Saviour confines all religious worship to God alone : “ Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”‡ It is his answer to the devil, when he tempted him to fall down and worship him, but he gives such an answer as excludes all creatures, not only bad, but good spirits, from any share in religious worship : our Saviour does

* 1 John iii. 8.

† John i. 18.

‡ Matth. iv. 10.

not deny to worship him merely because he was the devil (though that a man may do without the guilt of idolatry, who knows him to be the devil, if those men are in the right, who allow nothing to be idolatry, but to worship some being for the supreme God, who is not supreme; for then you may worship the devil without the guilt of idolatry, if you do not believe him to be the supreme God), but our Saviour's reason for not worshipping him was, because we must worship none but God. Which is as good a reason against the worship of the most glorious angel, as of the devil himself: nay, our Saviour denies to worship him, though the devil made no terms with him about the kind or degrees of worship: he does not require him to offer sacrifice to him (which is the only act of worship the Church of Rome appropriates to the supreme God), but only to bow down before him, as an expression of religious devotion; he did not demand that degree of worship, which the Church of Rome calls *latria*, and appropriates to the supreme God: nay, he confesses that he was not the supreme God, for he does not pretend to dispose of the kingdoms of the world in his own right, but says, they were given to him, and he had power to give them to whom he pleased; in which he acknowledges that he had a superior, and therefore could not in the same breath, desire to be owned and worshipped as the supreme. But our Saviour denies to give him this inferior degree of worship, and thereby teaches us, that no degree of religious worship must be given to any being, but the supreme God.

And because mankind were very apt to worship inferior demons, as believing them to have the care of this lower world, and that it was in their power to do great good to them, to answer their prayers, and to mediate for them with the superior deities, or with the supreme God, if they believed one supreme, which appears to be a received notion among them: to prevent this kind of idolatry, God advances his own Son to be the universal Mediator, and the supreme and sovereign Lord of the world; that all mankind should make their addresses and applications to him, and offer up their prayers only in his name; that in him they should find acceptance, and in no other name; which was the most effectual way to put an end to the worship of all inferior deities, and creature patrons and advocates; for when we are assured, that no other being can mediate for us with effect and power, but only Christ, it is natural to worship no other mediator but him, who being the

eternal Son of God, may be worshipped without danger of idolatry. Thus St. Paul tells us, that though the heathen world had "gods many, and lords many, yet to us there is but one God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ:"* one supreme and sovereign Deity, and one Mediator between God and men.

Now this being so apparently one end of Christ's coming into the world, to suppress the idolatry of creature worship, and to confine all religious worship to one supreme Being, in opposition to the many gods of the heathens, and to teach us to make our applications to this one God by one Mediator, in opposition to the worship of inferior deities; can any man imagine, that the worship of saints and angels, and the Virgin Mary, can be any part of the Christian religion? For how dear soever they are to God, they are but his creatures; and if sovereign princes will not receive their greatest favourites into their throne, much less will God.

If God, under the Gospel dispensation, has taken care to prevent the worship of inferior beings, by appointing his own Son to be our only Mediator and Advocate, can we imagine, that he ever intended we should offer up our prayers to other mediators? If he had liked the mediation of creatures, would he have given his own Son to be our Priest and our Mediator? Whatever fair pretences may be made for this, it apparently contradicts the Gospel dispensation; for if we must own but one God, he alone must be worshipped; if we have but one Mediator, we must offer up our prayers only in his name and intercession. The religious worship of creatures is idolatry, and if God intended to root idolatry out of the world, by the Gospel of Christ, he could never intend to set up the worship of saints, and the Virgin Mary, which though it have not all the aggravations of Pagan idolatry, yet is creature worship.

Thus we know how fond the heathens were of material images and pictures, to represent their gods as visibly present with them; and to receive religious worship in their stead: not that they did believe their gods to be corporeal, or that their corporeal images were proper likenesses of their gods, in which a late author places the whole of idolatry, which I confess was agreeable enough to his design, to find out such a notion of idolatry, as it may be no persons in the world were ever guilty of, and then he might excuse whom he pleased from

* 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

idolatry : but the heathens were not such great sots, as this account makes them, as the learned “founder of all anticatholic, and antichristian principles”* (as this author is pleased to style a very great man, whose name will be venerable to future ages), has abundantly proved. But they wanted some material representations of their gods, in which they might, as it were, see them present, and offer up their petitions to them, and court them with some visible and sensible honours. Now to cure this idolatry, though God would not allow any images or pictures for worship, yet by the law of Moses, he appoints them to build an house or temple for himself, where he would dwell among them, and place the symbols of his presence ; there was the mercy-seat, and the cherubims covering the mercy-seat, and there God promised Moses “to meet with him, and to commune with him from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony.”† Now this was a symbolical representation of God’s throne in heaven, where he is surrounded with angels as we know ; the holy of holies itself was a figure of heaven ; and therefore the Jews, when they were absent from the temple, prayed towards it, and in the temple (as is thought) towards the mercy-seat, as the place of God’s peculiar residence ; as now when we pray, we lift up our eyes and hands to heaven, where God dwells ; so that under the law God had a peculiar place for worship, and peculiar symbols of his presence, but no images to represent his person, or to be the objects of worship : I know some Roman doctors would fain prove the cherubims to have been the object of worship, and which is more wonderful, a late bishop of the Church of England has taken some pains to prove the same, and thereby to justify the worship of images in the Church of Rome ;‡ and before I proceed, I shall briefly examine what he has said in this cause.

One would a little wonder, who reads the second commandment, which so severely forbids the worship of images, that God himself should set up images in his own temple as the objects of worship ; and a modest man would have been a little cautious, how he had imputed such a thing to God, which is so direct a contradiction to his own laws. That the cherubims were “statues or images, whatever their particular

* Dr. Stillingfleet’s Defence of the Discourse concerning Idolatry.

† Exod. xxv. 22.

‡ Reasons for abrogating the Test, p. 124, &c.

form was," I agree with our author, and that is the only thing I agree with him in : for,

1. That "they were sacred images set up by God himself, in the place of his own worship,"* I deny. For the holy of holies, where the ark was placed, and the mercy-seat over the ark, and the cherubims at the two ends spreading their wings, and covering the mercy-seat, was not the place of worship, but the place of God's presence. The place of worship is the place wherein men worship God ; now it is sufficiently known, that none of the Jews were permitted to go into the holy of holies, nor so much as to look into it, and therefore it could not be no more the place of their worship : the holy of holies was the figure of heaven, and therefore could be no more the place of worship to the Jews, than heaven now is to us, while we dwell on earth. The high priest indeed entered into the holy of holies once a year, with the blood of the sacrifice,† which was a type of Christ's entering into heaven with his own blood, and yet the priest went thither not to worship, but to make an atonement ; which I take to be two very different things ; however, if you will call this worship, it has no relation to any worship on earth, but to what is done by Christ in heaven, of whom the high priest was a type. And this, I think, is a demonstration, that the placing of cherubims to cover the mercy-seat in the holy of holies, does not prove the lawful use of images in temples or churches, or in the worship of God on earth ; if it proves any thing it must prove the worship of God by images in heaven, of which the holy of holies was a figure ; and if any man can be so foolish as to imagine that, let them make what they please of it, so they do but excuse us from worshipping God by images on earth.

2. That these cherubims "were the most solemn and sacred part of the Jewish religion ; that nothing is more remarkable in the Old Testament, than the honour done to the cherubims ; that an outward worship was given to these images, as symbols of the Divine presence," that the "high priest adored these cherubims once a year," as this author asserts, I utterly deny ; and he has not given us one word to prove it.

For the cherubims were so far from being the most solemn and sacred part of the Jewish religion, that they were no part at all of it, if by religion he means worship ; for there was no regard at all had to the cherubims in the Jewish worship ; and

* Ibid. p. 127.

† Heb. ix. 11, 12.

it is so far from being remarkable in the Old Testament, that there is not the least footstep, or intimation of any honour at all done to the cherubims: there is nothing in Scripture concerning them, but the command to make them, and place them at the two ends of the mercy-seat; and that God is said to dwell between the cherubims, and to give forth his oracles and responses from that place: but I desire to learn, where the Jews are commanded to direct their worship to or towards the cherubims? Where the high priest is commanded to adore the cherubims once a year? Or what Protestant grants he did so, as this author insinuates?

He supposes the cherubims to have been "the symbols of God's presence" and his "representation,"* and that the Jews directed their worship to them as such, and that is to worship God by images, or to give the same signs of reverence to his representations, as to himself: but how does it appear that the cherubims were the symbols of God's presence? God indeed is said to sit between the cherubims, and he promised Moses to commune with him from between the cherubims, but the cherubims were no symbols of God's presence, much less a representation of him: if any thing was the symbolical presence of God, it was the mercy-seat, which was a kind of figurative throne, or chair of state; but the cherubims were only symbolical representations of those angels, who attend and encompass God's throne in heaven, and were no more representations of God, or symbols of his presence, than some great ministers of state are of the king; as this author himself acknowledges, when he makes the four beasts in the Revelations (Rev. iv. 6, 7), "which stood round about his throne,"† to be an allusion to the representation of the immediate Divine presence in the ark by the cherubims: if he had said to the cherubims covering the mercy-seat, which was his figurative throne, and where he was invisibly present, without any visible figures or symbols of his presence, he had said right: for the cherubims which covered the mercy-seat, were no more symbols of God's presence, than the four beasts, which stood before the throne, are the presence of God; or than some great courtiers or ministers of state, who attend the king, are the presence of the king; they attend the king, wherever he is, and so may be some sign of his presence, but are not a symbolical presence, as a chair of state is. But it seems our author imagined, that the cherubims were such symbols of

* Page 130.

† Page 127.

God's presence, and such representations of him, as images were of the Pagan gods, and therefore might be worshipped with the same signs of reverence, as God himself was ; according to Thomas Aquinas's rule, that the image must be worshipped with the same worship, which is due to the prototype, or that being whose image it is, which is such old Popery, as Monsieur de Meaux, and the Representer cry shame of ; well, but how does he prove, that any worship was directed to these cherubims ? I can find no proof he offers for it, but "David's exhortation (as he calls it), to the people, to honour the ark (he should have said worship), προσκυνεῖτε, bow down to, or worship his footstool, for it, or he, is holy."* Now suppose this did relate to the ark, what is that to the cherubims ? When but four pages before, he tells us, that the ark is called God's footstool, and the cherubims his throne ; how then does David's exhortation to worship the ark, which is God's footstool, prove that all their worship, must be directed to the cherubims, which are his throne ? It is a pity, that great wits have but short memories.

And yet I fancy, our author would have been much troubled to prove the ark to be meant by God's footstool ; for the ark was in the holy of holies, which was a figure of heaven ; and neither the heaven, nor anything in it, but the earth, is in Scripture called God's footstool ; and the Psalmist expressly applied it to Zion,† and to the holy hill, which, I will not prove, was not the ark.

And this I suppose is a sufficient confutation of his exposition of the words, "To bow down to, or worship his footstool ;" for I believe he did not think that Mount Zion, or the holy hill, was the object of worship, or the symbol of God's presence ; but there God was present, and that was reason enough to worship at his footstool, and at his holy hill : as our English translation reads it.

But now, suppose the Jews were to direct their worship towards the mercy-seat, which was covered with the cherubims, where God had promised to be present ; how are the cherubims concerned in this worship ? The worship was paid only to God, though directed to God, as peculiarly present at that place ; which is no more, than to lift up our eyes and hands to heaven, where the throne of God is, when we pray to him : I grant, that *bowing to*, and *bowing towards* any thing, as the ob-

* Page 130.

† Psalm xcix. 2, 9.

ject of worship, is the very same, as this author observes ; and therefore had the Jews either bowed *to* or *towards* the cherubim, as the objects of their worship, as the Papists bowed *to* or *towards* their images, they had been equally guilty of idolatry, and the breach of the second commandment ; but when bowing *to* signifies bowing to an object of worship, and bowing *towards* signifies bowing to this object of worship, only towards such a place, where he is peculiarly present, this makes a great difference ; and this is all the Jews did at most, if they did that ; they bowed to God towards the mercy-seat, where he dwelt, without any regard to the cherubims or mercy-seat, as the object of worship, which was as invisible to the Jews then, as the throne of God and the angels in heaven are now to us ; and we may as well say, that those who lift up their eyes and their hands to heaven, when they pray to God, worship the angels, who encircle his throne, because they know that the angels are there ; as say, that the Jews worshipped their invisible cherubims, because they knew that the cherubims were there : for is there any necessity that the Jews must worship whatever they knew was in the holy of holies, because they worshipped God towards that place, any more than there is, that we must worship whatever we know to be in heaven, when we direct our worship to God in heaven ?

Men, I grant, may worship an unseen object, for so we all worship God, whom we do not and cannot see ; but it is a good argument still, that the cherubims were not intended by God for the objects of worship, because they were concealed from the people's sight ; for I believe the world never heard before of worshipping invisible images : the original intention of images, is to have a visible object of worship : for an invisible image can affect us no more than an invisible God ; and if our author had consulted all the patrons of image-worship, whether Pagan or Popish, he would have found most of the reasons they allege for this worship to depend on sight, and therefore whatever he thought, are all lost when a man shuts his eyes. A man who directs his worship to an image, may be an idolater in the dark, and with his eyes shut ; but as blind as idolaters are, there never had been any image-worship, had their images been as invisible as their gods ; and therefore sight has more to do in this matter, than our author was aware of.

But it seems the high-priest once a year did see these cherubims, and adore and worship them. But this is another mis-

take: for the Jews did believe, that the high-priest never saw the cherubims, or mercy-seat, even when he went once a year to the holy of holies; and they have great reason for what they say, since God expressly commanded, that when he went into the holy of holies, he should take "a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat, that is upon the testimony, that he die not," Levit. xvi. 12, 13. Which shews that the cherubims, and mercy-seat, were to be covered with a cloud of incense, and to become as invisible to the high-priest within the veil, as to the people without it.

But suppose the high-priest did see the cherubims, when he entered within the veil, I have one plain argument to prove that he did not worship them, not only because no act of worship was commanded him when he went into the holy place, but because as the holy of holies was the figure of heaven, and the cherubims the types of angels, who stand about the throne of God; so the high-priest entering into the holy of holies, was the type of Christ ascending into heaven with his own blood; and therefore the high-priest must do nothing in the holy of holies, but what was a proper figure and type of what Christ does in heaven: and then he must no more worship the cherubims, which covered the mercy-seat, or the typical throne of God, than Christ himself, when he ascended to heaven, was to worship the angels, who stand about the throne.

So that notwithstanding God's command to make two cherubims, and to place them at the two ends of the mercy-seat in the holy of holies, all image-worship was strictly forbid by the law of Moses; and God has provided the most effectual remedy against it, by the incarnation of his Son: mankind have been always fond of some visible deity, and because God cannot be seen, they have gratified their superstition by making some visible images and representations of an invisible God: now to take them off from mean corporeal images and representations, which are both a dishonour to the Divine nature, and debase the minds of men, God has given us a visible image of himself, has clothed his own eternal Son with human nature, who is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," Heb. i. 3. And therefore, St. John tells us, "That the word was made flesh, and dwelt

among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," John i. 14. And for this reason, when Philip was desirous to see the Father, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth;" Christ tells him, that the Father is to be seen only in the Son, who is his visible image and glory: "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" John xiv. 8, 9. This was one end of Christ's incarnation, that we might have a visible Deity, a God incarnate to represent the Father to us, who is the living and visible image of God; and there could not be a more effectual way to make men despise all dead material representations of God, than to have God visibly represented to us in our own nature.

It is true, Christ is not visible to us now on earth, but he is visible in heaven, and we know, he is the only visible image of God, and that is enough to teach us, that we must make and adore no other. He is as visible to us in heaven, as the mercy-seat in the holy of holies was to the Jews, and is that true propitiatory of which the mercy-seat was a type and figure, Rom. iii. 25: "Him hath God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," *ἱλαστήριον*, the mercy-seat, as that word is used, Heb. ix. 5. He is the natural image of God, and his mercy-seat, or presence and throne of grace; he is his visible image, though he cannot be seen by us; for the typical mercy-seat in the holy of holies, did prefigure, that his residence should be in heaven, and therefore invisible to us on earth; but there we may see him by faith, and there he will receive our prayers, and present them to his Father.

Now then to sum up this argument: since it was one main design of Christ's appearance, to root all the remains of idolatrous worship out of the world, is it credible, that the worship of saints and angels, and the Virgin Mary; the worship of images and relics, as it is practised in the Church of Rome, should be any part of Christian worship, or allowed by the Gospel of our Saviour? If creature-worship, and image-worship were so offensive to God, here is the worship of creatures and images still, and therefore all the visible idolatry that ever was practised in the world before: all that they can pretend is, that they have better notions of the worship of saints, and angels, and images, than the heathens had: but whether they have or no, will be hard to prove: the Pagan philosophers

made the same apologies for their worship of angels, and demons, and images, which the learned Papists now make, and whether unlearned Papists have not as gross notions about their worship of saints and images, as the unlearned heathens had, is very doubtful, and has been very much suspected by learned Romanists themselves : but suppose there were some difference upon this account, can we think, that Christ, who came to root out all idolatrous worship, intended to set up a new kind of creature-worship and image-worship in greater pomp and glory than ever, and only to rectify men's opinions about it ? Suppose the idolatry of creature-worship and image-worship, does consist only in men's gross notions about it ; yet we see under the law, to prevent and cure this, God did not go about to rectify their opinions of these things, but absolutely forbids the worship of all images, and of any other being but himself : which methinks he would not have done, had there been such great advantages in the worship of saints, and angels, and images, as the Romanists pretend : and when God, in the law of Moses, forbade all creature and image-worship, can we think, that Christ who came to make a more perfect reformation, should only change their country gods into saints and angels, and the Virgin Mary, and give new names to their statues and images ? Which, whatever he had taught about it, instead of curing idolatry, had been to set up that same kind of worship, which the law of Moses absolutely forbade, and condemned as idolatry.

When God, to cure the idolatrous worship of inferior dæmons, as their mediators and advocates with the supreme God, sent his own Son into the world to be our Mediator, can we think, that he intended after this, that we should worship angels, and saints, and the Virgin Mary, as mediators ? When God has given us a visible image of himself, his eternal, and incarnate Son, whom we may worship and adore, did he still intend that we should worship material and sensible images of wood or stone ? By the incarnation of his own Son, God did indeed take care to rectify men's mistakes about creature-worship, and to cut off all pretences for it : those who pleaded that vast distance between God and men, and how unfit it was that sinners should make their immediate approaches to the supreme God, and therefore worshipped inferior dæmons as middle beings between God and man, have now no pretence for this, since God has appointed his own Son to be our mediator : those who worshipped images as the visible represen-

tations of an invisible God, have now a visible object of worship, a God incarnate, a God in the nature and likeness of a man; and though we do not now see him, yet we have the notion of a visible God and Mediator, to whom we can direct our prayers in heaven, which is satisfaction enough even to men of more gross and material imaginations, without any artificial and senseless representation of the Deity: and was all this done that men might worship creatures and images without idolatry? Or rather, was it not done to cure men's inclinations to commit idolatry with creatures and images? Whoever believes that the Gospel of our Saviour was intended as a remedy against idolatry, can never be persuaded, that it allows the worship of saints and images; which if it be not idolatry, is so exactly like it in all external appearance, that the allowance of it does not look like a proper cure for idolatry.

SECT. II.

Concerning the great love of God to mankind, and the assurances of pardon and forgiveness which the Gospel gives to all penitent sinners; which are much weakened by some Popish doctrines.

2. THE Gospel of Christ was intended to give the highest demonstration of God's love to mankind, and the greatest possible security to all humble penitent sinners, of the forgiveness of their sins: hence the Gospel is called the "Grace of God," and the "Gospel of Grace," as being a dispensation of love and goodness; and therefore, whatever lessens and disparages the Gospel-grace, can be no Gospel doctrine. As to consider this particularly.

The Gospel magnifies the grace of God, in giving his own Son for us: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins," 1 John iv. 9, 10. And St. Paul assures us, that this is such a glorious manifestation of God's love, as will not suffer us to doubt of any other expressions of his goodness: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Rom. viii. 32. So that the Gospel of our Saviour gives us much higher demonstrations of God's love and goodness, than either the light of nature, or the law of Moses did. Love is the prevailing attribute of God under the Gospel dispensation, for "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John iv. 16.

Thus the Gospel of Christ gives a humble penitent as great assurance of pardon, as his own guilty fears can desire; for repentance and remission of sins is preached in the name of Christ: he has expiated our sins by the sacrifice of his death; "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us: much more then being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. For as he was delivered for our offences, so he was raised again for our justification; and "him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins."* So that "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,† who is able also to save all them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," Heb. vii. 25. These are the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and therefore nothing can be a Gospel doctrine, which weakens or overthrows them. Let us then examine the Popish doctrine of purgatory, and the invocation of saints and angels as our mediators with God, and see how they are reconcilable with the Gospel notion of God's love, and that security it gives us of pardon, through the merits and intercession of Christ.

1. Let us consider the doctrine of purgatory, which is but the outward court or region of hell, where the punishments are as severe as in hell itself, only of a less continuance; and yet as short as they are, they may last many hundred, nay thousand years, unless their friends and the priests be more merciful to them, or they themselves have taken care before death to pay the price of their redemption. This is a barbarous doctrine, and so inconsistent with that mighty love of God to penitent sinners, as it is represented in the Gospel of Christ, that it is not reconcilable with any notion of love and goodness at all; you may call it justice, you may call it ven-

* Acts v. 31. † 1 John ii. 1.

geance, if you please, but love it is not, or if it be, it is such a love as no man can distinguish from hatred : for my part I declare, I do not desire to be thus loved ; I should rather choose to fall into nothing, when I die, than to endure a thousand years torments to be happy for ever ; for human nature cannot bear the thoughts of that : and is this that wonderful love of God to sinners, which is so magnified in the Gospel, to torment those, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, some hundred or thousand years in the fire of purgatory, which is not cooler than the fire of hell.

The light of nature, I confess, never taught this ; for mankind never had a notion of such an outrageous love ; they always thought, that the love of God consisted in doing good, not in damning those whom he loves, for so many ages : and if this be all the discovery the Gospel has made of the love of God, we have no great reason to glory in it. He who can believe that God, who so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son for the redemption of sinners, will torment a penitent sinner so many years in purgatory, till he has either endured the punishment of his sins himself, or is released by the charity of his friends, or the masses of some mercenary priests, deserves to lie in purgatory, till he thinks more honourably of the Divine goodness, and be convinced, that it is no such extravagant commendation of the love of God, to send penitent sinners to purgatory.

There are two extravagant notions whereon the doctrine of purgatory is founded, which overthrow all the natural notions men have of goodness, and destroy all the hope and confidence of the most penitent sinners in the goodness of God. As,

1. That God may forgive sins, and yet punish us for them ; for no man can go into purgatory according to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, whose sins are not already forgiven : but though his sins are forgiven, he must make satisfaction for their temporal punishment, which is due to them, either in this world, or in purgatory : now how reconcilable these two are, to forgive and to punish, let all mankind judge. I believe, very few men think they are forgiven when they are punished ; for that which all men desire should be forgiven them is the punishment they have deserved. What is it men are afraid of when they have sinned ? Is it not that they shall be punished for it ? What is it men desire when they desire pardon ? Is it not that they may not be punished ? And is it any comfort to a malefactor to be pardoned, and to be hanged ?

Does any man boast of his love and kindness, or take any comfort in it, who freely forgives him, but exacts the payment of the debt, or the punishment of his fault? And if this be so contrary to the very notion of goodness and forgiveness among men, how comes it to be the notion of goodness and forgiveness in God? How comes that to be love and goodness which the sinner receives no benefit by? For love and goodness, I think, signifies to do good; or if this be goodness, let those take comfort in it that can.

If it be said, that it is an act of goodness, to exchange the eternal punishment of hell, which is due to sin, into the temporal punishment of purgatory, I grant this is something, but only ask, Whether it would not have been a more perfect expression of love and goodness, to have remitted the temporal punishment also of, it may be, some thousand years torment in purgatory? Whether this might not have been expected under a dispensation of the most perfect love? And from that God who sent his only begotten Son into the world to save sinners? Whether those sins are perfectly forgiven, which shall be avenged, though not with eternal, yet with long temporal punishments in the next world? Whether any man thinks himself perfectly forgiven, who is punished very severely, though not absolutely according to his deserts? And consequently, whether the doctrine of purgatory be not a very great diminution of the love of God, and the grace of the Gospel? And whether that can be a true Gospel doctrine, which represents the love of God much less than the love of a kind and good man, who when he forgives the injury, forgives the whole punishment of it? Nay, whether that can be a Gospel doctrine, which represents the love of God less than infinite? And I suppose an infinite love may forgive true penitents the whole punishment of their sins; and then there is no need of purgatory.

2ndly, In purgatory, God does not only punish those whom he has pardoned, but he punishes for no other reason but punishment sake. For thus the Roman doctors tell us, that the souls in purgatory are in a state of pardon, and in a state of perfect grace; and they suffer the pains of purgatory, not to purge away any remains of sin, or to purify and refine them, and make them more fit for heaven, but only to bear the punishment due to sin, for which they had made no satisfaction, while they lived. Now I dare boldly affirm, this is irreconcilable with any degree of love and goodness: to make any

punishment just, it must have respect to the guilt of sin; to make it an act of goodness, it must be intended for the reformation of the sinner; but when sin is pardoned, the guilt at least is taken away, and therefore such punishments can have no relation to guilt; and when the sinner is in a perfect state of grace, and needs no amendment, such punishments can have no respect to the good and reformation of the sinner, and therefore such punishments are neither so just nor good; and this is the exact notion of purgatory; and methinks we should consider, whether this agrees with that account the Gospel gives us of the love and goodness of God: should a prince have a jail of the same nature with purgatory, where for several years he torments those whom he pretends to have pardoned, and who are grown very good men, and good subjects, and need no correction or discipline, I believe all the world would laugh at those, who should call this love and goodness, pardon and mercy. Hell is very irreconcilable with the goodness of God, because it is prepared only for those, who are the objects of a just, a righteous vengeance, and a very good God may be very just; but purgatory can never be reconciled with the superabundant goodness of God to sinners, through Jesus Christ, unless men think it a great kindness to suffer the pains of hell for several months, years, or ages, for no reason which makes it either just or good to suffer them. So that a Popish purgatory is inconsistent with the belief of God's great love and goodness to sinners, in Jesus Christ, and destroys the hope and confidence of sinners: for if they may lie in purgatory for some thousand years, as they may do, notwithstanding the love of God, and the merits of Christ, if the Pope, or the priests, or their money be not more merciful unto them, they have no great reason to glory much in the goodness of God, though they should go to heaven at last: so that our Protestant need not dispute much about purgatory: let him only ask a Popish priest, how the doctrine of purgatory can be reconciled with that stupendous love of God, declared to penitent sinners, in his Son Jesus Christ? For it is a contradiction to the notion of goodness among men, to inflict such terrible punishments in mere grace and love, even when the sin is pardoned, and the sinner reconciled, and no longer in a state of discipline and trial.

Secondly, The doctrine of purgatory destroys, or weakens that security the Gospel hath given sinners of their redemption from the wrath of God, and the just punishment of their

sins. Our great security is the love of God, declared to the world by our Lord Jesus Christ ; but if the love of God to penitent sinners, who are redeemed by the blood of Christ, be consistent with his tormenting them in purgatory so many thousand years, as you have already heard, it will be a very hard thing to distinguish such love from wrath, and a sinner, who is afraid of so many thousand years punishment, can take no great comfort in it : but besides this, the doctrine of purgatory destroys men's hope and confidence in the merits and intercession of Christ, and in the express promises of pardon and remission of sins in his name.

1. It destroys men's hopes in the merits of Christ, and the atonement and expiation of his blood ; for if the blood of Christ does not deliver us from the punishment of sin, what security is this to a sinner ? Yes, you will say, Christ has redeemed us from eternal, though not from temporal punishments, and therefore penitent sinners have this security by the expiation of Christ's death, that they shall not be eternally damned : this I know the Church of Rome teaches ; but I desire to know, how any man can be satisfied from Scripture, that Christ by his death has delivered us from eternal punishments, if he have not delivered us from temporal punishments of sin in the next world ? I thankfully acknowledge, and it is the only hope I have, that the Gospel has given us abundant assurance of the expiation and atonement made for sin by the blood of Christ ; but what I say, is this, that if these texts which prove our redemption by the death of Christ, do not prove that Christ has redeemed us from the whole punishment due to sin in the next world, they prove nothing, and then we have not one place of Scripture to prove, that Christ, by his death, has redeemed us from eternal punishments ; which is enough to make all Christians abhor the doctrine of purgatory, if it destroy the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ. As to shew this briefly :

The hope and security of sinners depends upon such Scripture expressions as these : That Christ has died for our sins ; that he has made atonement for sin ; that he is a propitiation through faith in his blood ; that he has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; that remission and forgiveness of sins is preached in his name ; that by him we are justified from all those things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses ; that being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; that

we are reconciled unto God, and saved from wrath by him. Now I desire to know, whether all these expressions signify, that for Christ's sake, and through the atonement and expiation of his blood, a penitent sinner shall be delivered from the punishment due to his sins? If they do not signify this, how is a sinner secured, that though his sins are pardoned, and he is justified, and reconciled to God, and redeemed from the curse of the law, and saved from wrath, he shall not, after all this, be damned for his sins, since that is the punishment of sin, which it seems is not removed, when sin is pardoned, and the sinner justified and reconciled to God? If these expressions do not signify taking away the punishment of sin, I desire one text of Scripture to prove, that a sinner who is pardoned and justified, shall not undergo the eternal punishment of his sins. If to be pardoned and justified, &c. does signify to be delivered from the punishment of sin, I desire to know, how a sinner, who is pardoned and justified, can be punished for his sins? That is, how a sinner, who is released from the punishment of his sins, should be bound to suffer the punishment of his sins in purgatory?

Our Roman adversaries do indeed distinguish between the temporal and eternal punishment of sin; the eternal punishment of sin, they say, Christ has made satisfaction for, and that is removed by his death, that no penitent sinner shall be eternally damned; but a sinner must make satisfaction for the temporal punishment of sin himself, either in this world, or in purgatory: and consequently that forgiveness of sins, signifies the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, but not of the temporal. Now I shall not put them to prove this distinction from Scripture, which is a very unreasonable task, because there is nothing in Scripture about it; but yet I would gladly be secured, that I shall be saved from eternal punishments; and therefore I would gladly know, how forgiveness of sins, and our redemption from the curse of the law, signifies our deliverance from eternal punishments, if they do not signify our deliverance from the punishment of our sins? And how can they signify our deliverance from the punishment of our sins, if notwithstanding this we must suffer the punishment of our sins in purgatory? If they signify, that we shall not be punished for our sins, then indeed they may signify that we shall not be eternally punished; but they cannot signify that we shall not be eternally punished, unless they signify that we shall not be punished, and therefore not in purgatory

neither ; if that be the punishment of sin. The truth is, this is a very senseless distinction between the temporal and eternal punishment of sin : for I desire to know, whether the temporal punishment be not the punishment of sin ? be not the curse of the law ? If it be, then forgiveness of sin, if it remits the punishment, remits the temporal punishment, for that is the punishment of sin ; then our redemption from the curse of the law, redeems us from purgatory, for that is the curse of the law too : if you add, and from death, for that is the curse of the law too, and yet those who are redeemed and justified, die still ; which shews the fallacy of this argument ; for it seems redemption from the curse of the law, does not signify our redemption from the whole curse ; for then a justified person must not die, since bare dying is part of the curse : I answer, this had certainly been true, had not the necessity of dying been expressly excepted out of this redemption ; “for in Adam all die,” and “it is appointed (by a divine decree) for all men once to die ;” and could they shew, where purgatory is excepted too, then I would grant, that those who are redeemed from the curse of the law might fall into purgatory, if that be any comfort to them : and yet the case is vastly different between death and purgatory : for though death be the curse of the law, yet we may be delivered from death as a curse and punishment, without being delivered from the necessity of dying : and thus good men are redeemed from death : for their sins are expiated and pardoned, and then the sting of death is gone ; for the sting of death is sin, and therefore when our sins are pardoned, death cannot sting us, can do us no hurt ; because it does not deliver us over to punishment, but transplants us into a more happy state. The fears of death are conquered by the promises of immortal life, and death itself shall at the last day be swallowed up in victory, when our dead bodies shall be raised immortal and glorious ; so that though good men still die, yet they are redeemed from the curse of the law, from death itself as a curse and a punishment. But the Popish purgatory is a place of punishment, and nothing but punishment ; and therefore is not reconcilable with the remission and forgiveness of sin.

Again I ask, Whether there are two kinds of punishments due to sin, temporal and eternal, of such a distinct nature and consideration, that the promise of forgiveness does not include both ? Nay, that God cannot forgive both ; that only the eternal punishment can be forgiven, but the temporal punishment must be satisfied for, or endured by the sinner : if this

were the case indeed, then I would grant, the promise of forgiveness could extend only to eternal punishments, because God can forgive no other; and the forgiveness of eternal punishment, does not include the forgiveness of the temporal punishment. But if the curse of the law be eternal death, and all other punishments, which can properly be called the punishment of sin (for correction and discipline is not the wrath of God, and the curse of the law), are only parts of the curse, and a partial execution of it; if the only thing that makes sinners obnoxious to temporal punishments is, that they are under the sentence of eternal death, which God may execute by what degrees he pleases; then to forgive eternal punishment, must include the forgiveness of temporal punishments, as parts or branches of it. As suppose there were a law, that no man should suffer any bodily punishments, but such a malefactor as is condemned to die, but when the sentence of death is passed upon him, it should be at the prince's pleasure to defer the execution of this sentence, as long as he pleased, and in the mean time to inflict all other punishments on him, whatever he pleased; in this case to pardon the sentence of death, would deliver such a man from all other punishments too, which by the law are due only to that man, who is under the sentence of death: and in such a constitution for any man to say, that the prince's pardon extends only to life, but does not excuse from whipping and pilloring, and perpetual imprisonment, would be to make the pardon void, since no man by the law can suffer those other punishments but he who is condemned to die, and therefore he who is pardoned the sentence of death, in consequence of that, is pardoned all other punishments too.

Thus it is here: the original curse against sin was, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," which by the Gospel of Christ is expounded of eternal death, and there is no other threatening in all the Gospel against sin, but eternal death; and therefore all other punishments are inflicted by virtue of this law, and consequently he who is delivered from this curse of the law, from eternal punishments, is delivered from the whole punishment due to sin; unless they can find some other law in the Gospel, besides that which threatens eternal death, which obliges a sinner to punishment.

Again, since they acknowledge, that Christ by his death has delivered us from eternal punishments, I do not think it worth the while to dispute with them, whether those sufferings and

calamities, which good men are exposed to in this world, may properly be called punishments, or only correction and discipline ; but I desire to know, why they call purgatory, which is a place of punishment in the other world, a temporal punishment ? For this is an abuse of the language of Scripture, which makes this world temporal, and the next world eternal, as St. Paul expressly tells us ; “The things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Cor. iv. 18. And therefore temporal punishments signify the punishments in this world, but the unseen punishments, as well as the unseen rewards of the next world are eternal ; which is a demonstration, that there is no purgatory, unless it be eternal, and then it is but another name for hell ; and therefore the state of the next world is called either life or death, eternal life or eternal death : those “who believe in Christ shall never die,” John xi. 25, 26. Now I desire to know the difference between living and dying, and perishing in the next world ; for bad men do not cease to be, nor lose all sense in the next world, no more than good men ; and therefore life can only signify a state of happiness, and death a state of misery, which is much worse than not being : now if good men must not perish, must not die, but live in the next world, they must not go to purgatory, which is as much perishing, as much dying, as hell, though not so long ; but if they must never die, never perish, they must never suffer the pains of purgatory, which is a dying and perishing, that is, a state of torment and misery, while they continue there.

Let us then see how a Papist, who believes a purgatory fire in the next world, wherein he shall be tormented (God knows how long !) for his sins, can prove that a penitent sinner shall not be eternally damned : Oh ! says he, Christ has died for our sins, and made atonement for them, and we are pardoned and justified through faith in his blood ; and what then, may we not still be punished for our sins ? If not, what becomes of purgatory ? If we may prove, that we shall not be eternally damned for sin, which is the proper punishment of it : for if to be pardoned and justified, signify to be delivered from punishment, it signifies our deliverance from the whole punishment of sin, since the Scripture does not limit it : if they do not signify our deliverance from punishment, then we may be eternally punished for sin, though we are pardoned and justified.

But we are “redeemed from the curse of the law, and saved

from wrath." But if such a man may go to purgatory, why not to hell? Or if the curse of the law, and the wrath of God be in hell, but not in purgatory, though the torments are equally great, why may not he lie for ever in purgatory, as well as a thousand years? with this comfort, that though he be infinitely tormented, yet it is not the curse of the law, nor the wrath of God.

Well, but Christ has promised, that those "who believe in him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life:" and that proves that the pains of purgatory cannot be for ever, for then Christ could not make good his promise of bestowing everlasting life on them: so I confess one would think, and so I should have thought also, that when Christ promised, that such believers should not perish, and should never die, that he meant, such men should not go to purgatory in the next world; but if falling into purgatory be not perishing, and not dying, it may be everlasting life too, for ought I know, and then the pains of purgatory may be eternal.

Whoever would not forfeit all the assurance the Gospel has given us, of our redemption from hell, and a glorious immortality, must reject the Popish doctrine of purgatory, as a flat contradiction to all the gracious promises of the Gospel: for hell, or an eternal purgatory, is as reconcilable with the promises of forgiveness and immortal life, as the Popish purgatory is.

2. This doctrine of purgatory destroys our hope and confidence in the mediation and intercession of Christ, and that for these two plain reasons: 1. As it represents him less merciful and compassionate; and, 2. Less powerful, than the wants and necessities of sinners require him to be. For,

I. After all that is said in Scripture of his being so "merciful and compassionate an high-priest," a sinner who hears what is told him of purgatory, could wish him a great deal more compassionate than he is: for it is no great sign of tenderness and compassion to leave his members in purgatory fire, which burns as hot as hell. Could I believe this of our Saviour, I should have very mean thoughts of his kindness, and not much rely on him for anything: we should think him far enough from being a merciful and compassionate prince, who can be contented to torture his subjects for a year together; and it is a wonderful thing to me, that when a merciful man cannot see a beast in torment without relieving it, it should be thought consistent with the mercy and compassion

of our Saviour, to see us burn in purgatory for years and ages. To be sure this destroys all our hope in him in this world; for why should we think, he will be concerned what we suffer here, who can contentedly let us lie in purgatory, to which all the calamities and sufferings of this life are mere trifles? O blessed and merciful JESU! pardon such blasphemies as these. For,

II. If he be compassionate, he must want power to help us; and that destroys the hope of sinners as much as want of compassion. It must be want of will or power in him, that he does not deliver us from purgatory as well as hell: and if he want power to deliver us from purgatory, for my part, I should more question his power to deliver from hell, for that is the harder of the two: if his blood could not expiate from the temporal punishment of sin, which the merits of some supererogating saint, or the Pope's indulgence, or the Priest's masses can redeem us from, how could it make expiation for eternal punishment? If his interest in the court of heaven will not do the less, how can it do the greater? There is no doctrine more irreconcilable with the perfect love and goodness of God, and the merits and intercession of our Saviour, which are the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, which is a dispensation of love and grace, than this of purgatory, and therefore we may safely conclude that this is no Gospel doctrine.

2. Let us now examine the doctrine of invocation of saints and angels as our mediators with God, and see whether it does not disparage the grace of the Gospel, the love of God, and of our mediator and advocate Jesus Christ, to penitent sinners. Now a very few words will decide this matter.

1. With respect to God: how can that man believe, that God is so very gracious to sinners for the sake of Christ, who seeks to so many advocates and mediators to intercede for him with God? To imagine that we want any mediator to God, but only our High Priest, who mediates in virtue of his sacrifice, is a reproach to the Divine goodness. The wisdom and justice of God may require a sacrifice, and a high-priest to make atonement for sin, but infinite goodness needs not any entreaties, and mere intercessions to move him. A truly good man, who knows a proper object of his kindness, needs not to be asked to do good. The use of such advocates and mediators among men, is either to recommend an unknown person to the favour of the prince, or fairly to represent his cause to him, which has been misrepresented by others, or to procure

favour for an undeserving person, or among equal competitors, to procure some one to be preferred ; this is all the use of intercession among men : for a good, and wise, and just prince, will do what is wise, and just, and good, not only without intercessors, but against all intercessions to the contrary. Now I suppose no man will say, that God wants mediators and advocates upon any one of these accounts ; for he knows every man, understands perfectly his cause, will never be persuaded by any intercessions to shew kindness to unfit objects, that is, to impenitent sinners ; and his goodness is so unconfined, and so extensive to all, that there can never be any competition for his favour ; and therefore to multiply advocates and mediators to God, must argue a great distrust of his mercy and goodness, which a kind and good prince would take very ill of us.

God indeed has commanded us to pray for one another in this world, as he has to pray for ourselves ; but this is not by way of interest and merit, as the Church of Rome pretends the saints in heaven pray for us, but by humble supplications, which is very reconcilable with the goodness of God, to make prayer a necessary condition of granting pardon and other blessings we want : but as the use of prayer for ourselves, is not to move God merely by our importunities to do good to us, for we must pray in faith, that is, with a humble assurance and confidence that God will hear us, which includes a firm belief of his readiness to grant what we pray for ; so neither are our prayers for others to move God by our interest in him, that is, they are not the intercessions of favourites, but of humble supplicants.

There was great reason why God should make prayer the condition of our receiving, though he wants not our importunities to move him, because there are a great many excellent virtues exercised in prayer ; such as great sorrow for sin, great humility of mind, faith in God's promises, the acts of love and affiance and trust in God, and a constant dependence on his grace and providence for all spiritual and temporal blessings : and there was great reason why he should command us to pray for others, though he wants none of our intercessions for them ; because it is a mutual exercise of charity, of love to our brethren, and forgiveness to our enemies, and is a mighty obligation to do all other acts of kindness ; for those who know it to be their duty to pray for one another, will think themselves bound to do good to one another also : this becomes those, who live and converse together in this world, because it is a great

instrument of virtue, and that is a reason why God should encourage the exercise of it, by promising to hear our prayers for each other.

But as far as mere goodness is concerned, the Gospel represents God as so very good to sinners, that there is no need of any intercessor for them: for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. This was an act of goodness antecedent to the incarnation and death of Christ, and the highest act of goodness that God could manifest to the world, and therefore secures us of God's love and goodness to sinners without a mediator and advocate; for that love which provided a mediator for us, was without one, and proves, that it was not for want of goodness, or that he needed entreaties, that he gave his Son to be our mediator. And therefore hence St. Paul proves, how ready God is to bestow all good things on us: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things," Rom. viii. 32. And our Saviour himself represents the goodness of God, by the tenderness and compassion of an earthly parent: "If ye then, being evil (that is, less good than God is), know how to give good things to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him," Matth. vii. 11: especially in the parable of the prodigal, where our Saviour describes the goodness of God to sinners, by that passion of joy wherewith the Father received his returning prodigal; nay, he assures his disciples, that there was no need of his own intercession to incline God to be good and kind to them: "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came out from God," John xvi. 26, 27. God is so infinitely good, that he needs no mediators or intercessors to incline him to all acts of goodness; but as he is the wise and just Governor of the world, he requires a sacrifice for sin, and a high-priest to make atonement for it, and to intercede in virtue of the sacrifice. Such a mediator Christ is, who alone is both our sacrifice and our priest, and therefore our only mediator; not to incline God to be good, for that he was before, infinitely good, or else he had not given his Son to be our sacrifice and our high-priest, but to make atonement for our sins, and thereby to reconcile the exercise of God's goodness with his wisdom and justice in

governing the world. Such a Mediator and High-Priest does not lessen the Divine goodness, for the intention of his mediation is not to make God good and kind, but to make it wise and just in God to do good to sinners; but all other mediators in heaven, whose business it is by prayers and entreaties, and interest and favour to incline God to be good to such particular persons as they intercede for, is a real disparagement to the Divine goodness; as if he would not be good unless he were conquered by entreaties, and overruled by the prevailing intercessions of some great favourites: and yet such mediators as these the saints, and angels, and Virgin Mary are, if they be mediators at all; and therefore to pray to them as to our mediators, argues such a diffidence and distrust of God's goodness, as does not become the Gospel of our Saviour; this can be no Gospel doctrine, because it is irreconcilable with that account the Gospel gives us of the love of God.

2. Nor is it less injurious to the love of our Saviour, to fly to the prayers and aids of saints, and angels, and the Virgin Mary herself. I shall not now dispute, what encroachment this is upon the mediatorship of Christ, to make our addresses and applications to other mediators; but whoever does so, must either think that Christ wants interest with God, without the joint intercession of saints and angels, or that he wants kindness to us, and either will not intercede for us at all, or will not do it unless he be prevailed with by the intercession of saints, or the entreaties or the commands of his mother. I suppose they will not pretend that he wants power to do what we ask of him, when he himself has assured us, "that whatsoever we ask of the Father in his name, he will give it us," John xv. 16, John xvi. 23, 24. Does our Mediator then need other mediators to intercede with him for us? What! he who became man for us? who lived a laborious and afflicted life for us? who loved us so as to give himself for us? who is a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, and touched with a feeling of our infirmities, being in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin?

What a change does this make in the whole Gospel? Had not the Church of Rome found out some better security for sinners, in the mediation of saints, and angels, and the blessed Virgin, what a hopeless state had we been in? For all that the Gospel tells us is, that God in great love and goodness to sinners, sent his Son to be our Saviour; and that we might have the greater assurance of his pity and compassion for us,

he became man, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; and not only so, but submitted to all the weaknesses and infirmities of our nature, to the greatest shame and reproach, to the sharpest pains, and the most infamous death, that he might the better know what our temptations and sufferings are in this world, and might be more sensibly affected with our condition in all our sufferings: this, one would have thought, should have given the greatest security to sinners of his readiness to help them, who did and suffered all this for them; and this is the only security which the Gospel of our Saviour gives us. But it seems Christ is not merciful and pitiful enough: his virgin mother has softer and tenderer passions, and such an interest in him, or authority over him, in the right of a mother, as some of them have not without blasphemy represented it, that she can have anything of him; and thus they suppose the other saints to be much more pitiful than Christ is, and to have interest enough to protect their supplicants, or else it is not imaginable why they should need or desire any other advocates. Now let any man who understands the Gospel, and finds there how the love of Christ is magnified, not only in dying for us, but in his being a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, that this is the only hope of sinners, that "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is also a propitiation for our sins," think the invocation of saints, as our patrons and advocates, to be a Gospel doctrine if he can.

SECT. III.

Concerning the Nature of Christian Worship.

3. ANOTHER manifest design of the Gospel, was to reform the worship of God, not only by extirpating idolatry, but by purging it from all Pagan and Jewish superstitions, and to appoint such a worship as is more agreeable to the nature both of God and man. And whoever will take the pains to compare the worship of the Church of Rome, with that worship which our Saviour has prescribed in the Gospel, will easily discover how unlike they are. Let us then consider what Christ has reformed in the worship of God, and what kind of worship he has prescribed to his disciples.

1. What he has reformed in the worship of God; and that may be comprehended in one word; he has taken away all

that was merely external in religion. By which, I do not mean that our Saviour has forbid all external acts of worship, or such external circumstances as are necessary to the decent and orderly performance of religious worship, which the nature and reason of things requires under all dispensations of religion; but that he has laid aside all such external rites as either were, or were thought to be in themselves acts of religion, and to render such worshippers very acceptable to God. A great many such rites there were in the Pagan religion, and a great many in the Jewish worship of God's own institution, and a great many more, which the tradition of the elders, and the superstitions of the scribes and Pharisees had introduced.

We know the Jewish worship consisted of external rites; in their temple, and altars, and sacrifices, and washings, and purifications, in new moons and sabbaths, and festival solemnities, in consecrated garments and vessels for the service of the temple, in distinction of meats, &c., the very external observance of these rites were acts of religion, and necessary to make their worship acceptable to God; and the wilful and presumptuous neglect or contempt of them, was punished with death.

Now our Saviour has abrogated all these Jewish rites, and has instituted nothing in the room of them, excepting the two sacraments, baptism, and the Lord's supper, which are of a very different nature and use, as we shall see presently. He did not, indeed, while he was on earth, blame the observation of the law of Moses, which till that time was in full force, and which he observed himself; but he blamed the external superstition of the Pharisees, in washing cups and platters, and making broad their phylacteries, and thinking themselves very righteous persons, for their scrupulous observation even of the law of Moses, in paying tithe of mint and cummin, &c., while they neglected "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith," Matth. xxiii. 23. But when our Saviour was risen from the dead, and had accomplished all the types and shadows of the law, then the Apostles with greater freedom opposed a legal and external righteousness, and though they did for a time indulge the Jews in the observation of the rites of Moses, yet they asserted the liberty of the Gentile converts from that yoke, as we may see in the first Council at Antioch, and in St. Paul's disputes with the Jews, in his Epistle to the Romans and Galatians, and elsewhere. And indeed, whoever considers the nature of the Christian religion,

will easily see, that all those ends which such external rites served either in the Jewish or Pagan religion, have no place here, and therefore nothing that is merely external can be of any use or value in the Christian worship. As to shew this particularly.

1. There is no expiation, or satisfaction for sin, under the Gospel, but only the blood of Christ, and therefore all external rites are useless to this purpose. Him,* and him only, "God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Death was the punishment of sin, and death is the only expiation of it; and none else has died for our sins but Christ alone, and therefore he only is a propitiation for our sins: and yet we know, how great a part both of the Pagan and Jewish religion was taken up in the expiation of sin; all their sacrifices, to be sure, were designed for this purpose, and so were their washings and purifications in some degree, and many other voluntary severities and superstitions, this being the principal thing they intended in their religious rites, to appease God, and make him propitious to them. Since, then, Christ has made a full and complete satisfaction and atonement for sin, and there is no expiation or satisfaction required of us, all external rites for expiation and atonement can have no place in the Christian worship, without denying the atonement of Christ, and this necessarily strips Christian religion of a vast number of external rites practised both by Jews and heathens.

2. Nor does the Gospel admit of any legal uncleanness and pollutions, distinction between clean and unclean meats, which occasioned so many laws and observances both among Jews and heathens; so many ways of contracting legal uncleanness, and so many ways to expiate it, and so many laws about eating and drinking, and such superstition in washing hands, and cups, and platters; but our Saviour told his disciples,† "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. For whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught; but those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the mouth proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashen hands, defileth not a man." And this also

* Rom. iii. 25.

† Matth. xv. 11, 17, 18, 19, 20.

delivers Christian religion from all those rites and observances, which concerned legal cleanliness, which were very numerous.

3. Nor is there any symbolical presence of God under the Gospel, which puts an end to the legal holiness of places and things. God dwelt among the Jews in the temple at Jerusalem, where were the symbols and figures of his presence. It was God's house, and therefore a holy place, and every thing that belonged to it had a legal holiness : for the holiness of things and places under the law was derived from their relation to God and his presence. This was the only place for their typical and ceremonial worship, whither all the males of the children of Israel were to resort three times a-year, and where alone they were to offer their sacrifices and oblations to God : the very place gave virtue to their worship and sacrifices, which were not so acceptable in other places ; nay, which could not be offered in other places without sin, as is evident from Jeroboam's sin, in setting up the calves at Dan and Bethel for places of worship, and the frequent complaints of the prophets against those who offered sacrifices in the high places ; and therefore the dispute between the Jews and Samaritans was, which was the place of worship, whether the temple at Jerusalem or Samaria. But Christ tells the woman of Samaria, that there should be no such distinction of places in the Christian worship : "Woman,* believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.—But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Not as if the Father should not be worshipped, neither at Jerusalem nor Samaria ; but that neither the temple at Jerusalem nor Samaria should be the peculiar and appropriate place of worship ; that God's presence and worship should no longer be confined to any one place ; that the holiness of the place should no longer give any value to the worship ; but those who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, should be accepted by him, wherever they worshipped him. Such spiritual worship and worshippers shall be as acceptable to God at Samaria, as at Jerusalem, and as much in the remotest corners of the earth as at either of them : for God's presence should no longer be confined to any one place, but he would hear our devout prayers from all parts of the world, wherever they were put up to him, and consequently the holiness of places is lost, which consists only in some peculiar Divine presence, and with the

* John iv. 21, 23.

holiness of places, the external and legal holiness of things ceases also : for all other things were holy only with relation to the temple, and the temple worship. For indeed, God's typical presence in the temple was only a figure of the incarnation. Christ's body was the true temple where God dwelt : for which reason, he calls his body the temple, " Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days : " and the Apostle assures us, that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ bodily, *σωματικῶς*, really and substantially, in opposition to God's typical presence in the material temple : and therefore, when Christ was come, who was the true Emmanuel, or God dwelling among us, and had, by his incarnation, accomplished the type and figure of the temple, God would no longer have a typical and figurative presence.

I will not quarrel with any man, who shall call the Christian churches, and the utensils of it, holy things ; for being employed in the worship of God, they ought to be separated from common uses, and reason teaches us to have such places and things in some kind of religious respect, upon the account of their relation, not to God, but to his worship ; but this is a very different thing from the typical holiness of the temple and altar, and other things belonging to the temple ; and there are two plain differences between them, the first with respect to the cause, the second with respect to the effect. The cause of this legal holiness was God's peculiar presence in the temple, where God chose to dwell as in his own house, which sanctified the temple, and all things belonging to it : the effect was, that this holiness of the place sanctified the worship, and gave value and acceptance to it. The first needs no proof, and the second we learn from what our Saviour tells the scribes and Pharisees : " Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing ; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor ! Ye fools and blind : for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold ? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing ; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind : for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift ? " * So that it seems, there was such a holiness in the temple and altar, as conveyed a holiness and sanctity to other things, even to the oblations and sacrifices which were offered there. But now, whatever holiness there is in Christian

* Matth. xxiii. 16, 17, 18, 19.

churches and oratories, they are sanctified by the worship that is performed there, not the worship sanctified by them. It is the assembly of Christians themselves, that is the Church, the house, the holy and living temple of God, not the building of wood or stone, wherein they meet. God in Christ is peculiarly present in the assemblies of Christians, though not by a figurative and symbolical presence; and thus he is present in the places where Christians meet, and which are consecrated and separated to religious uses, and there is a natural decency in the thing, to shew some peculiar respect to the places where we solemnly worship God; but the presence of God is not peculiar to the place, as it was appropriated to the temple of Jerusalem, but it goes along with the company and the worship; and therefore the place may be called holy, not upon account of its immediate relation to God, as God's house, wherein he dwells; but its relation to Christians, and that holy worship which is performed there; and I suppose every one sees the vast difference between these two: and thus all that vast number of ceremonies, which related to this external and legal holiness of places, vessels, instruments, garments, &c., have no place in the Christian worship, because there is no typical and symbolical presence of God, and consequently no such legal holiness of places and things, under the Gospel.

4. Nor are material and inanimate things made the receptacles of divine graces and virtues under the Gospel, to convey them to us merely by contact and external applications; like some amulets or charms, to wear in our pockets, or hang about our necks. There was nothing like this in the Jewish religion, though there was in the Pagan worship; but under the Gospel, Christ bestows his Holy Spirit on us, as the principle of a new divine life, and from him alone we must immediately receive all divine influences and virtues, and not seek for these heavenly powers in senseless things, which can no more receive, nor communicate divine graces to us, than they do wit and understanding to those who expect grace from them. For can grace be lodged in a rotten bone, or a piece of wood? or conveyed to our souls by perspiration in a kiss or touch?

5. The Christian religion admits of no external or ceremonial righteousness. "In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, *but a new creature, and obedience to the commandment of God*, and faith which worketh by love:"* the great design of the Gospel, and of all our

* Galat. v. 6.

Saviour's sermons, being to make us truly holy, that we may be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption, which is in the world through lust. There is nothing our Lord does more severely condemn, than an external and pharisaical righteousness, which consisted either in observing the external rites of the law of Moses, or their own superstitions received by tradition from their forefathers, and he expressly tells his disciples, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now this cuts off every thing which is external in religion, at a blow, because it cuts off all hopes and reliances on an external righteousness, and I believe men will not be fond of such superstitions, when they know they will do them no good.

6. And hence it appears, that there can be no place for any thing that is external in the Christian religion, but only for some federal rites ; such as the two sacraments of the Gospel are, baptism and the Lord's supper ; the first of which is our admission into the new covenant ; the second, the exercise of communion with Christ in this Gospel covenant. And such rites as these are necessary in all instituted religions, which depend upon free and voluntary covenants : for since mankind has by sin forfeited their natural right to God's favour, they can challenge nothing from him now, but by promise and covenant ; and since such covenants require a mutual stipulation on both sides, they must be transacted by some visible and sensible rites, whereby God obliges himself to us, and we to him ; but these being only the signs or seals of a covenant, are very proper for a religion, which rejects all external and ceremonial righteousness and worship : for it is not our being in covenant with God, nor the sacraments of it, that can avail us, without performing the conditions of the covenant ; and therefore this does not introduce an external righteousness.

Now whoever has such a notion and idea of the Christian worship as this (and let the Church of Rome confute it if she can), will easily see, without much disputing, how unlike the worship of the Church of Rome is, to true Christian worship.

For whoever only considers, the vast number of rites and ceremonies in the Church of Rome, must conclude it as ritual and ceremonial a religion as Judaism itself ; the ceremonies are as many, more obscure, unintelligible, and useless ; more severe and intolerable, than the Jewish yoke itself, which St. Peter tells the Jews, neither they nor their fathers were able

to bear ; it is indeed almost all outside and pageantry, as unlike the plainness and simplicity of the Gospel worship, as show and ceremony can make it.

It is true, external and visible worship must consist of external actions ; and must be performed with such grave and decent circumstances of time and place, and posture and habit, as become the solemnity of religious worship ; this reason and nature teaches ; and this the Church of England prudently observes, whose ceremonies are not religious rites, but decent circumstances of worship, few in number (as the necessary circumstances of action are but few), and grave and solemn in their use : but this is not to place religion in any thing that is external, but only to pay an external homage and worship to God, which differ, as worshipping God in a decent habit, differs from the religion of consecrated habits and vestments ; or as praying to God with an audible voice, differs from placing religion in words and sounds which we do not understand, or as kneeling at receiving the sacrament, differs from a bodily worship of the host, in bowing the knee.

But though the bare number of external ceremonies, which are always the seat of superstition, be a great corruption of the Christian worship, yet the number of them is the least fault of the ceremonies of the Church of Rome : as will appear, if we consider a little their nature.

For, 1. Most of their external rites are professedly intended as expiations and satisfactions for their sins. This is the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome, that notwithstanding the satisfaction made by Christ, every sinner must satisfy for his own sins, or have the satisfaction of other men's applied to him, out of the treasury of the Church, by the Pope's indulgences ; this is the meaning of all external penances in whippings, fastings, pilgrimages, and other superstitious severities ; their backs, or their feet, or their bellies, must pay for their sins, unless they can redeem them out of their pockets too : now it is plain, that these are such external superstitions, as can have no place in the Christian religion, which allows of no other expiation, or satisfaction for sin, but the blood of Christ.

2. Those distinctions between meats, which the Church of Rome calls fasting (for a canonical fast is not to abstain from food, but only from such meats as are forbid on fasting days), can be no part of Christian worship, because the Gospel allows of no distinction between clean and unclean things, and therefore of no distinction of meats neither : for “ meat commend-

eth us not to God," 1 Cor. viii. 8. The Church of Rome indeed, does not make such a distinction between clean and unclean beasts as the law of Moses did, and therefore is the more absurd in forbidding the eating of flesh, or anything that comes of flesh, as eggs, or milk, or cheese, or butter, on their fasting days, which is to impose a new kind of Jewish yoke upon us, when the reason of it is ceased. For there is no imaginable reason why it should be an act of religion merely to abstain from flesh, if flesh have no legal uncleanness; and if it had, we must all turn Carthusians, and never eat flesh; for how should it be clean one day, and unclean another, is not easy to understand. I am sure St. Paul makes this part of the character of the apostasy of the latter days, that they shall command "to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified by the word of God, and prayer."* And, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink.—Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances: (Touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using,) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"†

And yet, though they do not own the legal distinctions between clean and unclean things, their consecration would persuade one that there were something more than a mere legal uncleanness in all creatures, *viz.* that they are all possessed by the devil and wicked spirits; for when they consecrate salt and water to make their holy water, they first exorcise both the salt and water, to cast the devil out of them: and if such innocent creatures are possessed, I doubt none can escape; which has made me sometimes wonder, that they durst eat anything before it was first exorcised, for fear the devil should take possession of them with their meat. It is certain, if the Christian religion takes away all such distinctions between meats and drinks, the mere abstaining from flesh can be no part of Christian worship, much less so satisfactory and meritorious as the Church of Rome pretends, when such abstinence is appointed as a satisfactory penance.

3. As for the religion of holy places, altars, vestments,

* 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5.

† Col. ii. 16, 20, 21, 22.

utensils, the Church of Rome has infinitely outdone the Jewish laws : instead of one temple at Jerusalem, they have thousands to the full as holy and sacred as that, as may appear from their rites of consecration. Though herein, I confess, they differ : that the temple of Jerusalem was only God's house, and that alone made it a holy place, because God was there peculiarly present ; but the Popish churches derive their sanctity, not so much from the presence of God (for then they would be all equally holy), as from some great and eminent saint, who is peculiarly worshipped there. It is a great argument of the opinion men have of the holiness of any place, to go in pilgrimage to it, not merely in curiosity, but devotion ; as if either going so far to see the place were in itself an act of religion, or their prayers would be better heard there, than if they prayed at home : thus they travel to Jerusalem to visit the Holy Land and the sepulchre, and this may be thought in honour of our Saviour, who lived and died, and was buried there : but otherwise, I know not any church or chapel, which the most devout pilgrims think worth visiting merely upon the account of God or Christ : the several churches or chapels of the Virgin, especially those which are the most famed for miracles, or the churches where the relics of some great and adored saints are lodged, have their frequent visits for the sake of the Virgin, or of the saints ; but without some saint, churches lose their sacredness and veneration, which I suppose is the reason why they always take care of some relics to give a sacredness to them, without which no church can be consecrated ; that is, its dedication to the worship of God, cannot make it holy, unless some saint take possession of it by his or her relics.

This, I confess, is not Judaism, for under the Jewish law, all holiness of things or places was derived from their relation to God : now the names, and relics, and wonder-working images of saints and the blessed Virgin, give the most peculiar and celebrated holiness ; and whether this be not at least to ascribe such a divinity to them, as the Pagans did to their deified men and women, to whom they erected temples and altars, let any impartial reader judge. Those must have a good share of divinity, who can give holiness to any thing else.

For since they must have holy places, and something to answer the Jewish superstition, who cried, "The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD," I cannot blame them for making choice of saints to inhabit their churches, and sanctify

them with their presence, since, under the Gospel, God is no more present in one place than in another: he dwelt indeed in the temple of Jerusalem by types and figures, but that was but a type of God's dwelling in human nature: the body of Christ was the true temple, as he told the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up;" which he spake of the temple of his body: and now Christ is ascended into heaven, there is no temple on earth; and therefore if they will have temples, they must have the temples of saints, for the presence of God is now no more confined to a house, than his providence is to the land of Judea, as it was in a very peculiar manner, while the temple stood there. God dwells not on earth now, as he did among the Jews, but his presence, *viz.* our Lord Jesus Christ, is removed into heaven, and therefore he has no house on earth to answer to the Jewish temple, as the ancient Fathers asserted, that the Christians had neither temples nor altars: the Christian Church indeed is a holy and living temple, wherein the Holy Spirit dwells; but that is built not with stones or brick, but of living saints; and therefore the holiness of places and altars, and garments, &c. which make up so great a part of the Roman religion, is a manifest corruption of the simplicity of the Christian-worship. The Jewish temple made that worship most acceptable to God, which was offered there, because it was a type of Christ, and signified the acceptance of all our prayers and religious services, as offered up to God only in the name of Christ; but to think that any place is so holy now, that the bare visiting it, or praying in it, should bestow a greater holiness upon us, and all we do, should expiate our sins, or merit a reward, is no better than Jewish or Pagan superstition.

4. That the Church of Rome does attribute divine virtues and powers to senseless and inanimate things, is so evident from that great veneration they pay to the relics, and those great virtues they ascribe to them, from their consecrations of their *Agnus Dei*, their wax-candles, oil, bells, crosses, images, ashes, holy water, for the health of soul and body, to drive away evil spirits, to allay storms, to heal diseases, to pardon venial, and sometimes mortal sins, merely by kissing or touching them, carrying them in their hands, wearing them about their necks, &c. that no man can doubt of it who can believe his own eyes, and read their offices, and see what the daily practice of their Church is. Whoever has a mind to be satisfied about it, need only read Dr. Brevint's Saul and Samuel at

Endor, chap. xv. These things look more like charms than Christian worship, and are a great profanation of the Divine grace and spirit; indeed they argue, that such men do not understand what grace and sanctification mean, who think that little images of wax, that candles, that oil, that water and salt, that bells, that crosses, can be sanctified by the Spirit of God, and convey grace and sanctification by the sight, or sound, or touch, or such external applications. Christ has given his Holy Spirit to dwell in us, which works immediately upon our minds and rational powers, and requires our concurrence to make his grace effectual to cleanse and purify our souls, and to transform us into the Divine image; the grace of the Spirit is to enlighten our minds, to change our wills, to govern and regulate our passions, to instruct, to persuade, to admonish, to awaken our consciences, to imprint and fix good thoughts in us, to inspire us with holy desires, with great hopes, with divine consolations, which may set us above the fears of the world, and the allurements of it, and give greater fervour to our devotions, greater strength to our resolutions, greater courage and constancy in serving God, than the bare powers of reason, though enforced with supernatural motives, could do. This is all the sanctification the Gospel knows, and he who thinks that inanimate things are capable of this sanctification of the Spirit, or can convey such sanctification to us by some divine and invisible effluvia of grace, may as well lodge reason, and understanding, and will, and passions in senseless matter, and receive it from them again by a kiss or touch. To be sure men who know what the sanctification of the Spirit means, must despise such fooleries as these.

5. That all this encourages men to trust in an external righteousness, is too plain to need a proof; and therefore I shall not need to insist long on it.

For, 1. Such external rites are naturally apt to degenerate into superstition, especially when they are very numerous: the Jewish ceremonies themselves, their circumcision, sacrifices, washings, purifications, temple, altars, new moons and Sabbaths, and other festival solemnities, were the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and a cloak for their hypocrisy and great immoralities, though they were never intended by God for the justification of a sinner. For such external rites are so much easier to carnal men, than to subdue their lusts, and live a holy and virtuous life, that they are willing to abound in such external observances, and hope that these will

make expiation for their other sins ; and therefore when the typical use of these ceremonies was fulfilled by Christ, the external rites were abrogated, that men might no longer place any hope or confidence in anything which is merely external : and therefore that Church which fills up religion with external rites and ceremonies, were there no other hurt in it, lays a snare for men's souls, and tempts them to put their trust in an external righteousness, without any regard to the internal purity of heart and mind.

Especially, 2. When such external rites are recommended as very acceptable to God, as satisfactions for our sins, and meritorious of great rewards ; and this is the use they serve in the Church of Rome, as you have already heard. They assert the necessity of human satisfactions ; and what are these satisfactory works wherewith men must expiate their sins ? The principal of them are fastings, that is, abstaining from flesh, and other acts of penance, as whippings, pilgrimages, and some bodily severities, or prayers, that is, saying over such a number of *Ave Maries* ; or alms, that is to pay for indulgences, or to purchase masses for themselves or their friends in purgatory, or to found some religious houses, or to enrich those that are ; which are much more satisfactory and meritorious than common acts of charity to the poor : all which men may do, without the least sorrow for sin, without any true devotion to God, without mortifying any one lust. They mightily contend for the merit of works ; but what are their meritorious works ? Whoëver reads the lives of their canonized saints, will easily see what it was that made them saints : their characters are usually made up of some Romish superstitions, of their devotions to the Virgin Mary, and their familiar conversations with her, the severities of their fasts, and other external mortifications, their frequenting the mass, the great numbers of their *Ave Maries*, pretences to raptures and visions, and such wild extravagances as made them suspected of madness while they lived, and canonized them for saints when they were dead : other things may be added to fill up their stories, but these are the glorious accomplishments, especially of the more modern saints : for no man must be a saint at Rome, who is not a famous example of Popish superstitions.

Monkery is thought the most perfect state of religion among them, and has even monopolized the name, for no other persons are called "the religious," but those who belong to one

order or other : and wherein does the perfection of monkery consist? 1. In the vows of celibacy, poverty, and obedience to the superiors of their order, which are all external things, no virtues in themselves, and very often the occasion of great wickedness. 2. In the strictest observance of the external rites and ceremonies of their religion ; of masses, and *Ave Maries*, and fastings, and penances ; and many of them would be glad, if they could go pilgrimages too. These things are in perfection in their monasteries and nunneries, with such additional superstitions as are peculiar to particular orders. As for other true Christian virtues, they may as soon be found without the walls of the monastery as within.

Now when such external rites and observances shall be judged satisfactions and expiations for sin ; shall be thought the most highly meritorious ; shall be made the characters of their greatest saints, and the most perfect state of religion ; I cannot see how any true thorough-paced Romanist, can aim at any thing but a ceremonial righteousness.

Indeed, the true reason why any thinking men are so fond of an external and ceremonial righteousness, is to excuse them from true and real holiness of life : all men know that if they mortify their lusts, they need not afflict their bodies with fastings, and other severities ; that if they have their conversation in heaven, they need not travel in pilgrimages to Jerusalem or Loretto ; that if they take care to obey the laws of the Gospel, they need no satisfactions for their sins, nor no works of merit or supererogation which are nothing else but meritorious and supererogating satisfactions ; for all men know that in the offices of piety and virtue, they can never do more than is their duty ; and therefore, as nothing can be matter of merit which is our duty, so the true intention of all merits and works of supererogation, are to supply the place of duty, and to satisfy for their sins, or to purchase a reward, which they have no title to, by doing their duty ; but a good man, who by believing in Christ and obeying him, has an interest in his merits, and a title to the Gospel promises of pardon and eternal life, needs none of these satisfactions, merits or supererogations. Now would any man who believes that he cannot be saved without mortifying his lusts, be at the trouble of whippings and fastings, &c. not to mortify his lusts, but to keep them, and to make satisfaction for them ? Would any man travel to Jerusalem, or the shrine of any saint, who believes he shall not be forgiven unless he leaves his sins behind

him, which he might as well have parted with at home? The true notion of superstition is, when men think to make satisfaction for neglecting or transgressing their duty, by doing something which is not their duty, but which they believe to be highly pleasing to God, and to merit much of him : now no man who believes that he cannot please God without doing his duty, would be so fond of doing his duty, and doing that which is not his duty, nor pleasing to God, into the bargain.

3. And yet these meritorious and satisfactory superstitions are very troublesome to most men, and though they are willing to be at some pains rather than part with their lusts, yet they would be at as little trouble as possibly they can; and herein the Church of Rome, like a very indulgent mother, has consulted their ease; for one man may satisfy for another, and communicate his merits to him : and therefore those who, by their friends or money, can procure a vicarious back, need not whip themselves; they may fast, and say over their beads, and perform their penances and satisfactions by another, as well as if they did it themselves; or they may purchase satisfactions and merits out of the treasury of the Church, that is, they may buy indulgences and pardons; or it is but entering into some confraternity, and then you shall share in their merits and satisfactions. This is an imputed righteousness with a witness, and I think very external too, when men can satisfy and merit by proxies.

4. And I think it may pass for an external righteousness too, when men are sanctified and pardoned by relics, holy water, consecrated beads, bells, candles, *Agnus Dei's*, &c. And how unlike is all this to the religion of our Saviour, to that purity of heart and mind the Gospel exacts, and to those means of sanctification, and methods of piety and virtue it prescribes? Whoever considers what Christian religion is, can no more think these observances Christian worship, than he can mistake Popish legends for the Acts of the Apostles.

II. Let us now consider what kind of worship Christ has prescribed to his disciples : and the general account we have of it, John iv. 23, 24: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." Now there are three things included in this description of Gospel worship: 1. That we must worship God under the notion of a pure and infinite Spirit. 2. That

we must worship him under the character of a Father. 3. That we must worship him with the mind and spirit.

First, We must worship God under the notion of a pure and infinite Spirit, who has now confined his peculiar presence to no place, as he formerly did to the temple at Jerusalem ; for this was the present dispute, whether God would be worshipped at the temple at Jerusalem or Samaria ; as I observed above : in opposition to which our Saviour tells the woman, that God is a Spirit, and therefore not confined to any place ; he is every where, and present with us every where, and may be worshipped every where by devout and pious souls : that though, for typical reasons, he had a typical and symbolical presence under the Jewish dispensation, yet this was not so agreeable to his nature, who is a Spirit, and therefore he must not now be sought for in houses of wood and stone.

And indeed the reformation of the Divine worship must begin in rectifying our notions and apprehensions of God ; for such as we apprehend God to be, such a kind of worship we shall pay him ; as is evident from the rites and ceremonies of the Pagan worship, which was fitted to the nature and history of their gods ; for where there are no instituted rites of worship, all mankind conclude that the nature of God is the best rule of his worship, for all beings are best pleased with such honours as are suitable to their natures, and no being can think himself honoured by such actions as are a contradiction to his own nature and perfections.

Now if God will be worshipped more like a pure and infinite Spirit under the Gospel, than he was under the law ; if this be the fundamental principle of Gospel worship, that God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped as a Spirit, I think it is plain that nothing is more unlike a pure Spirit, than a material image ; nothing more unlike an infinite Spirit, which can have no shape or figure, than a finite and figured image, made in the likeness of a man, or of anything in heaven and earth ; nothing more unlike an infinite Spirit, which is life and mind, and wisdom, than a dead and senseless image ; and if under the law, where God suited his worship more to a typical dispensation than to his own nature, he would not allow of the worship of images, much less is this an acceptable worship to him under the Gospel, where he will be worshipped as a pure Spirit, for there is nothing in the world more unlike a living, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient Spirit, than a little

piece of dead senseless figured gold or silver, wood or stone, whatever shape the carver or engraver please to give it, since God has none. Now would any man who understands this, that God is a Spirit, and will under the Gospel be worshipped as a Spirit, should he go into many Popish churches and chapels, and see a vast number of images and pictures there, and people devoutly kneeling before them, suspect that these were Christian oratories, or this Christian worship, unless he knew something of the matter before? For there you shall find the pictures of God the Father, and the ever-blessed Trinity, in different forms and representations; the pictures of the blessed Virgin, and other saints and martyrs devoutly adored and worshipped; and would any man guess, that this were to worship God as a pure and infinite Spirit? A spirit cannot be painted, and then to worship God as a Spirit, cannot signify to look upon any representation of God, when we pray to him, which to be sure cannot give us the idea of an infinite Spirit. He who worships God as a Spirit, can have no regard to matter and sense, but must apply himself to God as to an infinite mind, which no man can do, who gazes upon an image, or contemplates God in the art and skill of a painter; for to pray to God in an image, and in the same thought to consider him as a pure and infinite mind, is a contradiction; for though a man, who believes God to be a Spirit, may be so absurd as to worship him in an image, yet an image cannot represent a spirit to him, and therefore either he must not think at all of the image, and then methinks he should not look on an image, when he worships God, for that is apt to make him think of it; or if he does think of the image, while his mind is filled with such gross and sensible representations, it is impossible in the same act to address to God, as to a pure invisible and infinite Spirit. Which shews how unfit and improper images are in the worship of God; for they must either be wholly useless, and such as a man must not so much as look or think on (which is very irreconcilable with that worship, which is paid to them in the Church of Rome), or while he is intent upon a picture or image, his mind is diverted from the contemplation of a pure and infinite Spirit, and therefore cannot, and does not worship God as a Spirit.

And the same is true of the images of saints and the blessed Virgin: for though to make pictures of men or women, is no reproach to the Divine nature, since they are not

the pictures or images of God, who is a Spirit, but of those saints, whom they are intended to represent, yet if all Christian worship be the worship of God, it is evident, that the worship of images, though they be not the images of God, but of the saints, can be no part of Christian worship, because God must be worshipped as a Spirit, and therefore not by any image whatsoever.

Now the Church of Rome will not pretend that the worship of saints and their images is a distinct and separate worship from the worship of God, but to justify themselves, they constantly affirm that they worship God in that worship which they pay to the saints and their images ; for they know, that to do otherwise, would be to terminate their worship upon creatures, which they confess to be idolatry, since all religious worship must terminate on God ; and therefore, should they give any religious worship to creatures, distinct and separate from that worship they give to God, it were idolatry upon their own principles.

Now if they worship God in the worship of saints and their images, then they worship God in the images of saints, and that I think is to worship him by images : the worship of a pure, infinite, and invisible Spirit, will admit of no images, whether of God or creatures, as the objects or mediums of worship.

But it may be said, that this is to graft our own fancies and imaginations upon Scripture ; for though Christ does say that God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit, he does not say that to worship God in spirit is not to worship him by an image ; but to worship God in spirit, in our Saviour's discourse with the woman of Samaria, is not opposed to image-worship, but to confining the worship of God to a particular place, such as the temples at Jerusalem and Samaria were, as I observed above. Now to this I answer :—

1. To worship God as a Spirit, does, in the nature of the thing, signify this ; for to worship God by any material or sensible representations, is not to worship God as a Spirit ; for an infinite Spirit cannot be represented by matter, nor by any shape and figure, because it neither is material, nor has any figure.

2. If God will not have his peculiar presence confined to any place under the Gospel, much less will he be worshipped by images and pictures ; for it is not such a contradiction to the nature of an infinite Spirit, to shew himself more peculiarly present in one place than in another, as it is to be worshipped

by sensible images and pictures. Though God fills all places, there may be wise reasons why he should confine the acts of worship to some peculiar place, and such typical reasons there were for it under the law ; but there never can be any reason why a Spirit should be represented and worshipped by an image, which is such a contradiction and dishonour to the nature of the Spirit ; and therefore, when God confined his symbolical presence to the temple at Jerusalem, yet he strictly forbade the worship of images, and much less then will he allow of image-worship, when he will not so much as have a temple.

3. For we must observe farther, that what our Saviour here says, God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit, is not a particular direction how to worship God, but a general rule to which the nature of our worship must be conformed ; and therefore it is our rule, as far as the plain reason of it extends. Under the law they were not left to general rules, but God determined the particular rites and ceremonies of his worship himself ; for under the law God had not so plainly discovered his own nature to them, as he has done by his Son in the Gospel. For “no man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” And therefore the nature of God was never made the rule of worship before. Though God was as much a Spirit under the law as he is under the Gospel, yet this was never assigned as a reason against image-worship, that God is a Spirit : but either that they saw no likeness or similitude in the mountain, when God spake to them, Deut. iv. 15, 16 ; or that he is so great and glorious a Being, that nothing in the world is a fit representation of him. “To whom then will ye liken God ? or what likeness will ye compare unto him ? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers ; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in,” &c.* But that God is a Spirit, who has no shape and figure, is a much better argument against image-worship than all this ; but this God had not so plainly declared to them ; and if God forbade the worship of images, when he thought fit to give no other reason for it, but that he had never appeared to them in any likeness or similitude, or that he was too great to be represented, we ourselves may now judge how unfit it is to worship God by an image, since our Saviour has declared that he is a Spirit,

* Isaiah xl. 18, 22, &c.

who has no likeness or figure, and that now he expects to be worshipped by us as a Spirit, and therefore without any image or sensible representation.

4. And yet some learned men think that our Saviour, in these words, had as well respect to the worship of God by images, as to his worship in the temple : for that he had respect to the object as well as place of worship is evident, from what he adds—"Ye worship ye know not what ; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews :"* wherein he informs the woman, that though she inquired only of the place of worship, the Samaritans were guilty of a greater fault than setting up the temple at Samaria, in opposition to the temple at Jerusalem, *viz.* in a false object, or an idolatrous manner of worship ; they worshipping a dove as the symbol and representation of God : and thus to worship God in spirit, is expressly opposed to worshipping God by images.

5. However, this comes much to one ; for if God being a Spirit, his worship must not be confined to any place or symbolical presence, then he must not be worshipped by an image ; for an image is a representative presence of God, or of the saints ; for the use of images is to represent that Being whom we worship as present to us : and therefore, if men consider what they do, they go to images, as to divine presences, to worship. Images, which are set up in churches and chapels for the worship of God or of the saints, are confined to places, and make those places as much appropriate and peculiar places of worship as the Jewish temple was, excepting that the temple was but one, and they are many. Heathen temples were the houses of their gods, or of their images, which were the presence of their gods ; and if we must not appropriate the presence of God to any place, then we must not worship him by images, which are of no use but to represent God as sensibly present with the image, or in the place where the image is. If God be better worshipped before an image than without one, then the worship of God is more confined to that place where an image is, than to those places which have no images. I cannot see how to avoid this, that if God must be worshipped by images, then there must be appropriate places of worship, *viz.* where the image is ; but if there be no appropriate places of worship under the Gospel, like the temple at Jerusalem, then God must not be worshipped by images ; for an image must be

* John iv. 22.

in some place ; and if God must be worshipped at or before his image, then that is the proper and peculiar place of worship where his image is ; nay, though the image be not fixed to any place, but be carried about with us, yet if we must worship God by images, the image is not only the object, but makes the place of worship ; for there we must worship God, where his image is, if we must worship him before his image. It is impossible to separate the notion of image-worship from the notion of a peculiar and appropriate place of worship ; for the image determines the place, as the presence of the object does : and as under the Gospel we may worship God any where, because he is an infinite Spirit, and fills all places, and is equally present with all devout worshippers, wherever they worship him : so where the image is consecrated for a Divine presence, it is not only the object, but the peculiar place of worship, because God is peculiarly present there, or more acceptably worshipped there, than where there is no image. So that if a peculiar and appropriate place of worship be contrary to the notion of an infinite Spirit, the worship of images is much more so ; for besides that they are gross and corporeal representations of a Spirit, they are divine presences too, and appropriate places of worship.

Secondly, As God must be worshipped under the notion of a Spirit, so under the character of a Father : as our Saviour expressly tells us, “The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him ;”* and therefore he taught his disciples to pray, “Our Father, which art in heaven.”† Under the law God was worshipped as a King, and that not so much the King of the whole world, but as in a peculiar manner the King of Israel. “The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble ; he sitteth between the cherubims (in his temple at Jerusalem), let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion, and he is high above all the people.”† But under the Gospel the peculiar character of God is a Father, and that not only as he is the Maker of all men, and so the Father of all, but as he is the Father of Christ, and in him the Father of all Christians. Now this makes a vast difference in our worship, from what is daily practised in the Church of Rome. For,

1. When we pray to God as our Father, we must pray to

* John iv. 23.

† Psalm xcix. 1, 2.

him as dwelling in heaven: as our Saviour teaches us to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." For as a Father, heaven is his house and habitation: "In my Father's house are many mansions,"* that is, in heaven, which is his house as a Father, as the temple at Jerusalem was his palace, considered as the King of Israel; and this is one reason, our Saviour intimates, why the presence of God shall no longer be confined to any particular place or temple, because he shall be worshipped as the universal Father, not as the King of Jewry: now when he is to be worshipped as a Father from all parts of the world, he must have such a throne and presence to which all the world may equally resort, and that can be no other than his throne in heaven, whither we may send up our prayers from all corners of the earth; but had he confined his presence to any place on earth, as he did to the temple of Jerusalem, the rest of the world must have been without God's peculiar presence, could have had no temple nor place of worship but at such a distance that they could never have come at it: for though God fills all places, it is a great absurdity to talk of more symbolical presences of God than one; for a symbolical presence confines the unlimited presence of God to a certain place, in order to certain ends, as to receive the worship that is paid him, and to answer the prayers that are made to him; and to have more than one such presence as this, is like having more Gods than one.

So that all our worship under the Gospel must be directed to God in heaven, and that is a plain argument that we must not worship God in images on earth, for they neither can represent to us the majesty of God in heaven, nor is God present with the image to receive our worship there. If God must now be worshipped, as dwelling in heaven, it is certain there can be no object of our worship on earth; for though God fill all places with his presence, yet he will be worshipped only as sitting on his throne in heaven; and then I am sure he must not be worshipped in an image on earth, for that is not his throne in heaven. This the mercy-seat in the holy of holies was an emblem of; for the holy of holies, in the Jewish temple, did signify heaven, and the mercy-seat covered with cherubims signified the throne of God in heaven, whither we must lift up our eyes and hearts when we pray to him. For though it is indifferent from what place we put up our prayers to God, while we have regard to the external decency of religious worship,

* John xiv. 2.

yet it is not indifferent whither we direct our prayers ; for we must direct our prayers to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* Now the throne of grace is only in heaven, whither Christ is ascended to make atonement for us ; for he is the true propitiatory, or mercy-seat : and therefore, if to direct our prayers to God, to his picture or image, or to the images of the Virgin Mary, or any other saints, did not provoke God to jealousy, yet it would do us no good, unless such images are God's throne of grace ; for all other prayers are lost, which are not directed to God on his throne of grace, where alone he will receive our petitions. If a prince would receive no petitions but what were presented to him sitting on such a throne, all men would be sensible how vain a thing it were to offer any petition to him elsewhere. And yet thus it is here : a sinner dare not, must not approach the presence of God, but only on his mercy-seat and throne of grace ; for any where else our God is a consuming fire, a just and a terrible judge : now God has but one throne of grace, and that is in heaven, as the mercy-seat was in the holy of holies, which was a type of heaven ; thither Christ ascended with his blood to sprinkle the mercy-seat, and to cover it with the cloud of incense, which are the prayers of the saints, as the high-priest did once a year in the typical holy place. Which is a plain proof, that all our prayers must be immediately directed to God in heaven, where Christ dwells, who is our true propitiatory and mercy-seat, who has sprinkled the throne of God with his own blood, and has made it a throne of grace, and where he offers up our prayers as incense to God.

2. To worship God as our Father, signifies to worship him only in the name and mediation of his Son Jesus Christ : for he is our Father only in Jesus Christ, and we can call him Father in no other name. By the right of creation, he is our Lord, and our Judge, but he is the Father of sinners only by adoption and grace, and we are adopted only in Christ : so that if Christian worship be the worship of God as a Father, then we must pray to God in no other name, but of his own eternal Son : the Virgin Mary, though she were the mother of Christ, yet does not make God our Father ; and then no other saint, I presume, will pretend to it : which shews what a contradiction the invocation of saints is to the nature of Christian worship, and how unavailable to obtain our requests of God. If we

* Heb. iv. 16.

must worship God only as our Father, then we must worship him only in the name of his Son, for he owns himself our Father in no other name ; and if he will hear our prayers, and answer our humble petitions only as a Father, then he will hear only those prayers which are made to him in the name of his Son : how great favourites soever the blessed Virgin and other saints may be, if God hear prayers only as a Father, it is to no purpose to pray to God in their names, for he hears us not.

3. To worship God as a Father, signifies to pray to him with the humble assurance and confidence of children : this is the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* For “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”† A dutiful son does not question his Father’s goodwill to him, nor readiness to hear and answer all his just requests ; he depends upon the kindness of his Father, and his interest and relation to him, and seeks for no other friends and favourites to recommend him.

And upon this account also the invocation of saints is a contradiction to the Gospel spirit of prayer, to that spirit of adoption, which teaches us to cry, Abba, Father ; for surely those have not the hope, and assurance, and *παρόρησία* of children, who dare not go to their father themselves, but must send their petitions to him by the hands of favourites and intercessors. To pray to God in the name of Christ, is only to pray to him as sons, for it is in his name only that he owns us for sons ; and this is the true spirit of adoption, in the name and mediation of Christ, to go to God, as children to a father ; but to pray to him in any other name, how powerful soever, is not to go to him as a Father, but as to our Lord and King, who must be addressed to by the mediation of some great favourites. To pray to God in any other name, which does not make us his sons, is to distrust our relation to him, as our Father in Christ ; and this is contrary to the spirit of adoption, which teaches us to call God Father, and gives us that assurance of his fatherly goodness to us in Christ, that we need and desire no other advocates.

Thirdly, To worship God in spirit, is to worship him with our mind and spirit ; for that is most agreeable to the nature of God, who is a Spirit. God cannot be worshipped but by a reasonable creature, and yet a beast may worship God as well

* Rom. viii. 15.

† Gal. iv. 6.

as a man who worships without any act of reason and understanding, or devout affections. To pray to God without knowing what we say, when neither our understandings nor affections can join in our prayers, is so absurd a worship of a pure mind, that transubstantiation itself is not more contrary to sense, than prayers in an unknown tongue are to the essential reason and nature of worship. I suppose no man will say, that to pray to God, or praise him in words which we do not understand, is to worship God in spirit, unless he thinks that a parrot may be taught to pray in the spirit : what difference is there between a man's not speaking, and speaking what he does not understand? Just so much difference there is between not praying, and praying what we do not understand : and he honours God to the full as much, who does not pray at all, as he who prays he knows not what, and, I am sure, he affronts him a great deal less : however, if Christian worship be to worship God in spirit, prayers in an unknown tongue, in which the mind and spirit cannot be concerned, is no Christian worship.

SECT. IV.

Concerning the Reformation and Improvement of Human Nature, by the Gospel of Christ.

4. ANOTHER principal end and intention of the Gospel, was to cure the degeneracy of mankind, and to advance human nature to its utmost perfection : for as man fell from his original happiness, by falling from the purity and integrity of his nature, so there was no restoring him to his lost happiness, much less no advancing him to a more perfect state of happiness, not to an earthly, but to an heavenly paradise, without changing and transforming his nature, and renewing him after the image of God. And therefore our very entrance into Christianity is a new birth : "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God : that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."* And such a man is called a new creature ; and a Christian life is a newness of life, and living after the Spirit, and walking after the Spirit :† and this new nature is the Divine nature, the image of God, the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,

* John iii. 5, 6.

† Rom. viii. 1.

which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.*

So that there are two things, wherein this new nature consists, knowledge, and righteousness, or true holiness, and I doubt it will appear, that the Church of Rome is no great friend to either.

I. Knowledge : now I suppose neither the Church of Rome, nor any one for her, will pretend that she is any great friend to knowledge : she is so horribly afraid of heresy, that she endeavours to nurse men up in ignorance of their religion, for fear they should prove heretics ; and indeed she has some reason for it : for the Church of Rome never was no triumphant, as in the most ignorant and barbarous ages ; but as knowledge broke in upon the world, so men turned heretics apace.

If there be any knowing Papists (as it would be very hard if there should be none), they are not beholden to their Church for it, which deprives them of all the means of knowledge : for she will not allow them to believe their senses, which is one way of knowing things, and the most certain we have : and yet she commands us to believe transubstantiation, which no man can do who believes his senses : and if I must not believe my senses in so plain a matter as what is bread and wine, I know no reason I have to believe them in any thing, and then there is an end of all knowledge that depends on sense ; as the proof of the Christian religion itself does : for miracles are a sensible proof, and if I must not trust my senses I cannot rely on miracles, because I cannot know whether there be any such thing as a real miracle.

The Church of Rome also forbids men the use of reason in matters of religion, will not allow men to judge for themselves, nor to examine the reasons of their faith ; and what knowledge any man can have without exercising his reason and understanding, I cannot guess ; for to know without understanding, sounds to me like a contradiction.

She also denies Christians the use of the Bible, which is the only means to know the revealed will of God : and when men must neither believe their senses, nor trust their reason, nor read the Scripture, it is easy to guess what knowing and understanding Christians they must needs be.

But it may be said, that notwithstanding this, the Church of Rome does instruct her children in the true Catholic faith, though she will not venture them to judge for themselves, nor

* Eph. iv. 24. Colos. iii. 10.

to read the Scriptures, which is the effect of her great care of them, to keep them orthodox: for when men trust to their own fallible reasons, and private interpretations of Scripture, it is a great hazard that they do not fall into one heresy or other: but when men are taught the pure catholic faith without any danger of error and heresy, is not this much better, than to suffer them to reason and judge for themselves, when it is great odds but they will judge wrong?

Now this would be something indeed, did the Church of Rome take care to instruct them in all necessary doctrines, and to teach nothing but what is true; and could such men, who thus tamely receive the dictates of that Church, be said to know and understand their religion? How far the Church of Rome is from doing the first, all Christians in the world are sensible but themselves, but that is not our present dispute; for though the Church of Rome did instruct her people in the true Christian faith, yet such men cannot be said to know and understand their religion; and to secure the faith by destroying knowledge, is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, which is to make men wise and understanding Christians: for no man understands his religion, who does not in some measure know the reasons of his faith, and judge whether they be sufficient or not; who knows not how to distinguish between truth and error, who has no rule to go by, but must take all upon trust, and the credit of his teachers; who believes whatever he is told, and learns his Creed, as school-boys do their grammar, without understanding it: this is not an active, but a kind of passive knowledge; such men receive the impression that is made on them, as wax does, and understand no more of the matter; now will any one call this the knowledge and understanding of a man, or the discipline of a child?

But suppose there were some men so dull and stupid, that they could never rise higher; that they are not capable of inquiring into the reasons of things, but must take up their religion upon trust; yet will any man say, that this is the utmost perfection of knowledge, that any Christian must aim at? Is this the meaning of "the word of God dwelling in us richly in all wisdom?"* Is this the way to give an answer to any one who asks a reason of the hope that is in us? The perfection of Christian knowledge is a great and glorious attainment; to understand the secrets of God's laws, those depths and mysteries of wisdom and goodness in the economy of

* Col. iii. 16.

man's salvation ; to see the analogy between the law and the Gospel, how the legal types and ancient prophecies received their accomplishment in Christ, how far the Gospel has advanced us above the state of nature, and the law of Moses ; what an admirable design it was to redeem the world by the incarnation, and death, and sufferings, and intercession of the Son of God ; what mysteries of wisdom and goodness the Gospel contains ; the knowledge of which is not only the perfection of our understandings, but raises and ennobles our minds, and transforms us into the Divine image : these things were revealed, that they might be known, not that they should be concealed from the world, or neglected and despised ; but this is a knowledge which cannot be attained without diligent and laborious inquiries, without using all the reason and understanding we have, in searching the Scriptures, and all other helps which God has afforded us.

Now if Christian knowledge be something more than to be able to repeat our Creed, and to believe it upon the authority of our teachers, if the Gospel of our Saviour was intended to advance us to a true manly knowledge, Christ and the Church of Rome seem to have two very different designs, our Lord in causing the Gospel to be wrote and published to the world, the other in concealing it as much as she can, and suffering nobody to read it without her leave, as a dangerous book, which is apt to make men heretics ; for it is hard to conceive, that the Gospel was written that it might not be read, and then one would guess, that he by whose authority and inspiration the Gospel was written and those by whose authority it is forbid to be read, are not of a mind in this matter.

1. This I think in the first place is an evident proof, that to forbid Christian people to read, and study and meditate on the word of God, is no Gospel doctrine, unless not to read the Bible, be a better way to improve in all Christian knowledge and wisdom, than to read it : for that is the duty of Christians, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; this was one great end of publishing the Gospel to the world, to enlighten and improve men's understandings, as well as to govern their lives ; and though we grant, men may be taught the principles of Christian religion, as children are, without reading the Bible, yet if they will but grant, that studying and meditating on the holy Scriptures, is the best and only way to improve in all true Christian knowledge ; this shews how contrary this prohibition of reading

the Scriptures is to the great design of the Gospel, to perfect our knowledge in the mysteries of Christ.

2. This is a mighty presumption also against transubstantiation, that it is no Gospel doctrine, because it overthrows the very fundamental principles of knowledge, which is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, to advance divine knowledge to the utmost perfection it can attain in this world.

Whoever has his eyes in his head, must confess, that the doctrine of transubstantiation is contrary to sense: for were our senses to be judges of the matter, they would pronounce the bread and wine after consecration, to be bread and wine still; and therefore whatever reason there may be to believe it not to be bread and wine, but flesh and blood, yet it must be confessed, that our faith in this matter contradicts our sense; for even Roman Catholics eyes, and noses, and hands, can see, and feel, and smell nothing but bread and wine: and if to our senses it appears to be nothing but bread and wine, those who believe it to be the natural body and blood of Christ, believe contrary to what they see.

Thus there is nothing more contrary to the natural notions we have of things, than the doctrine we have of transubstantiation: for if this doctrine be true, then the same individual body of Christ is in heaven at the right hand of God, and on ten thousand altars, at a great distance from each other on earth, at the same time. Then a human body is contracted into the compass of a wafer, or rather subsists without any dimensions, without extension of parts, and independent on place.

Now not to dispute, whether this be true or false, my only inquiry at present is, whether this do not contradict those natural notions all men have of the properties of a human body: let a man search his own mind, and try, if he find any such notion of a body, as can be present at more places than one at the same time: a body that is without extension, nay, that has parts without extension, and therefore without any distinction too: for the parts of an organical body must be distinguished by place and situation, which cannot be, if they have no extension; a body which is present without occupying a place, or being in a place: if we have no such natural notion of a body, as I am sure I have not, and I believe no man else has, then let transubstantiation be true or false, it is contrary to the natural notions of our minds, which is all I am at present concerned for: thus let any man try, if he have any notion of an accident subsisting without any substance, of a white, and

soft, and hard nothing ; of the same body, which is extended and not extended, which is in a place, and not in a place at the same time : for in heaven, I suppose they will grant, the body of Christ fills a place, and has the just dimensions and proportions of a human body, and at the same time, in the host, the very same body is present, without any extension, and independent on place ; that is, the same body, at the same time, is extended and not extended, fills a place and fills no place, which, I suppose, they mean by being independent on place ; now is and is not, is a contradiction to natural reason, and I have no other natural notion of it, but as of a contradiction, both parts of which cannot be true. Let us then briefly examine, whether it be likely, that transubstantiation, which contradicts the evidence of sense, and the natural notions of our minds, should be a Gospel doctrine, considering the Gospel as the most divine and excellent knowledge, and most perfective of human understandings. For,

1. This doctrine of transubstantiation, is so far from perfecting our knowledge, that it destroys the very principles of all human knowledge : all natural knowledge is owing either to sense or reason, and transubstantiation contradicts both, and whoever believes it, must believe contrary to his senses and reason, which if it be to believe like a Catholic, I am sure is not to believe like a man ; if the perfection of knowledge consist in contradicting our own faculties, transubstantiation is the most perfect knowledge in the world ; but, however, I suppose no man will say, that this is the natural perfection of knowledge, which overthrows the most natural notions we have of things : and yet,

2. All supernatural knowledge must of necessity be grafted upon that which is natural ; for we are capable of revealed and supernatural knowledge, only as we are by nature reasonable creatures, and destroy reason, and beasts are as fit to be preached to as men : and yet to contradict the plain and most natural notions of our minds, is to destroy human reason and to leave mankind no rule or principle to know and judge by. No man can know anything, which contradicts the principles of natural knowledge, because he has only these natural principles to know by ; and therefore however his faith may be improved by it, he forfeits his natural knowledge, and has no supernatural knowledge in the room of it : for how can a man know and understand that which is contrary to all the natural knowledge and understanding he has ? There may be some

revealed principles of knowledge superadded to natural principles, and these things we may know to be so, though we have no natural notion of them, and this perfects, because it enlarges our knowledge; as the knowledge of three Divine persons superadded to the natural belief of one supreme God; which does not overthrow the belief of one God, but only acquaints us, that there are three Divine Persons in the unity of the Godhead, which, whatever difficulty there may be in apprehending it, yet overthrows no natural notion: this is an improvement of knowledge, because we know all we did before, and we know something more, that as there is one God, so there are three Persons, who are this one God; and though we have no natural notion of this, how three Persons are one God, because we know no distinction between person and essence in finite beings, yet we have no natural notion, that there cannot be more Persons than one in an infinite Essence; and therefore this may be known by revelation, because there is no natural notion against it. But now I can never know that which is contrary to all the principles of knowledge I have; such men may believe it, who think it a virtue to believe against knowledge: who can believe that to be true, which they know to be false: for whatever is contrary to the plain and necessary principles of reason, which all mankind agree in, I know must be false, if my faculties be true, and if my faculties be not true, then I can know nothing at all, neither by reason nor revelation, because I have no true faculties to know with: revelation is a principle of knowledge as well as faith, when it does not contradict our natural knowledge of things; for God may teach us that which nature does not teach; and thus revelation improves, enlarges, and perfects knowledge: in such cases, faith serves instead of natural knowledge, the authority of the revelation instead of the natural notions and ideas of our minds; but I can never know that by revelation, which contradicts my natural knowledge; which would be not only to know that which I have no natural knowledge of, which is the knowledge of faith, but to know that by revelation, which by reason and nature I know cannot be; which is to know that, which I know cannot be known, because I know it cannot be.

So that transubstantiation, which contradicts all the evidence of sense and reason, is not the object of any human knowledge, and therefore cannot be a Gospel revelation, which is to improve and perfect, not to destroy human knowledge: I can never know it, because it contradicts all the notions of my mind;

and I can never believe it without denying the truth of my faculties, and no revelation can prove my faculties to be false; for I can never be so certain of the truth of any revelation, as I am that my faculties are true; and could I be persuaded that my faculties are not true, but deceive me in such things as I judge most certain and evident, then I can no more believe them as to any revelation, than I can as to their natural reasonings, for the same faculties must judge of both; and if the faculty be false, I can trust its judgment in neither.

3. The doctrine of transubstantiation destroys all possible certainty, what the true sense and interpretation of Scripture is, and thereby overthrows all supernatural knowledge. The Scripture we know is expounded to very different and contrary senses, and made to countenance the most monstrous and absurd doctrines; witness all the ancient heresies which have been fathered on the Scriptures. Now what way have we to confute these heresies, but to shew, either that the words of Scripture will not bear such a sense, or at least do not necessarily require it; that such an interpretation is contrary to sense, to reason, to the natural notions we have of God, and therefore is in itself absurd and impossible? But if transubstantiation be a Gospel doctrine, I desire any Papist, among all the ancient heresies, to pick out any doctrine more absurd and impossible, more contrary to sense and reason, than the doctrine of transubstantiation is; and then it is no argument against any doctrine, or any exposition of Scripture, that it is absurd and impossible, contrary to sense and reason, for so transubstantiation is; and if we may believe one absurd doctrine, we may believe five hundred, how absurd soever they be: and then what defence has any man against the most monstrous corruptions of the Christian faith? Is this the way to improve knowledge, to destroy all the certain marks and characters of truth and error, and to leave no rule to judge by? If the design of the Gospel was to improve our minds by a knowing and understanding faith, transubstantiation, which overthrows the certainty both of natural and revealed knowledge, can be no Gospel doctrine.

3. The authority of an infallible judge, whom we must believe in every thing, without examining the reasons of what he affirms, nay, though he teaches such doctrine as appears to us most expressly contrary to sense and reason, and Scripture, is no Gospel doctrine, because it is not the way to make men wise and understanding Christians, which is the great design of the

Gospel ; for to suspend the exercise of reason and judgment, is not the way to improve men's knowledge. An infallible teacher, and an infallible rule, do indeed mightily contribute to the improvement of knowledge ; but such an infallible judge as the Church of Rome boasts of, can only make men ignorant and stupid believers. For there is a vast difference between an infallible teacher, and an infallible judge, which few men observe, at least have not well explained ; for an infallible teacher is only an external proponent, and while men only teach and instruct, how infallible soever they are, every man is at liberty to use his own reason and judgment ; for though the teacher be infallible, he that learns must use his own reason and judgment, unless a man can learn without it. But now an infallible judge is not contented to teach and instruct, which is an appeal to the reason of mankind, but he usurps the office of every man's private reason and judgment, and will needs judge for all mankind, as if he were an universal soul, an universal reason and judgment, that no man had any soul, any reason or judgment but himself. For if every man has a private reason and judgment of his own, surely every man must have a right to the private exercise of it ; that is, to judge for himself ; and then there can be no such universal judge, who must be that to every man, which, in other cases, his own private reason and judgment is, which is to unsoul all mankind in matters of religion. And therefore, though there have been a great many infallible teachers, as Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, yet none ever pretended to be infallible judges but the Church of Rome ; that is, none ever pretended to deny people a liberty of judging for themselves, or ever exacted from them an universal submission to their infallible judgment, without exercising any act of reason and judgment themselves. I am sure Christ and his Apostles left people to the exercise of their own reason and judgment, and require it of them ; they were infallible teachers, but they did not judge for all mankind, but left every man to judge for himself, as every man must and ought, and as every man will do, who has any reason and judgment of his own : but an infallible judge, who pretends to judge for all men, treats mankind like brutes, who have no reasonable souls of their own.

But you will say, this distinction between an infallible teacher and an infallible judge, is very nice and curious, but seems to have nothing in it ; for does not he who teaches infallibly, judge infallibly too ? And must I not submit my

private judgment, which all men allow to be fallible, to a public infallible judgment, which I know to be infallible? If I know that I may be deceived, and that such a man cannot be deceived, is it not reasonable for me to be governed by his judgment, rather than my own? I answer, all this is certainly true as any demonstration, but then it is to be considered, that I cannot be so certain of any man's infallibility, as to make him my infallible judge, in whose judgment I must acquiesce, without exercising any reason or judgment of my own: and the reason is plain, because I cannot know that any man teaches infallibly, unless I am sure that he teaches nothing that is contrary to any natural or revealed law. Whoever does so, is so far from being infallible, that he actually errs; and whether he does so, I cannot know, unless I may judge of his doctrine by the light of nature, and by revelation. And therefore, though there may be an infallible teacher, there never can be any infallible judge, to whom I must submit my own reason and judgment, because I must judge of his doctrine myself, before I can know that he is infallible.

As for instance, when Moses appeared as a prophet and a lawgiver to the children of Israel, there was no written law, but only the law of nature; and therefore those great miracles he wrought, gave authority to his laws, because he contradicted no necessary law of nature. But had any other person at that time wrought as many miracles as Moses did, and withal taught the worship of many gods, either such as the Egyptians, or any other nations worshipped at that time, this had been reason enough to have rejected him as a false prophet, because it is contrary to the natural worship of one supreme God, which the light of nature teaches.

When Christ appeared, there was a written law, the writings of Moses and the Prophets, and all the miracles he wrought could not have proved him a true prophet, had he contradicted the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and therefore his doctrine was to be examined by them, and accordingly he appeals to Moses and the Prophets, to bear testimony to his person and doctrine, and exhorts them to search the Scriptures, which gave testimony to him: and how the miracles he wrought gave authority to any new revelations he made of God's will to the world, since he did not contradict the old. The law of nature, and the laws of Moses, were the laws of God; and God cannot contradict himself: and therefore the doctrine of all new prophets, even of Christ himself, was to be examined,

and is to be examined to this day, by the law and the prophets ; and therefore, though he was certainly an infallible teacher, yet men were to judge of his doctrine, before they believed him ; and he did not require them to lay aside their reason and judgment, and submit to his infallible authority, without examination.

So that all this while, there could be no infallible judge to whom all men were bound to submit their own private reason and judgment, and to receive all their dictates as divine oracles, without examination ; because they could not know them to be such infallible teachers, till they had examined their doctrine by the light of nature, and the law of Moses : and we cannot, to this day, know that Moses and Christ were true prophets, but in the same way.

Since the writing of the New Testament, there is a farther test of an infallible teacher (if there be any such in the world), that he neither contradict the light of nature, nor the true intent of the law of Moses, nor alter or add to the Gospel of Christ ; and therefore there can be no infallible judge, because be he never so infallible, we can never know that he is so, but by the agreement of his doctrine with the principles of reason, with the law and the prophets, and with the Gospel of Christ ; and therefore must examine his doctrine by these rules, and therefore must judge for ourselves, and not suffer any man to judge for us, upon a pretence of his infallibility.

Could I know that any man were infallible, without judging of his doctrine, then indeed there were some reason to believe all that he says, without any inquiry or examination ; but this never was, never can be. And therefore, though there may be an infallible teacher, there can be no infallible judge to whom I must submit my own reason and judgment, without asking any questions. Which, by the way, shews how ridiculous that sophism is, “the Church has not erred, because she is infallible ;” when it is impossible for me to know she is infallible, till by examining her doctrine by an infallible rule, I know that she has not erred.

And the truth is, it is well there can be no infallible judge ; for if there were, it would suspend and silence the reason and judgment of all mankind : and what a knowing creature would man be in matters of religion, when he must not reason, and must not judge ? just as knowing as a man can be without exercising any reason and judgment. And therefore, not only the reason and nature of the thing proves that there can be no

infallible judge, but the design of Christ to advance human nature to the utmost perfection of reason and understanding in this world, proves that he never intended there should be any : for to take away the exercise of reason and private judgment, is not the way to make men wise and knowing Christians; and if Christ allows us to judge for ourselves, there can be no infallible judge, whose office it shall be to judge for us all.

4. To pretend the Scripture to be an obscure or imperfect rule, is a direct contradiction to the design of the Gospel, to improve and perfect knowledge : for if the Scripture be so obscure in the essential matters of faith and Christian knowledge, that we cannot have any certainty what the true sense and interpretation of it is, without an infallible judge, then the Scriptures cannot improve our knowledge, because we cannot know what they are, we cannot understand their meaning, and therefore can learn nothing from them.

Yes, you will say, we may know their meaning, when they are expounded to us by an infallible judge : though the Scriptures are so obscure, that we cannot understand them without an infallible judge, yet we may certainly learn what the sense of Scripture is from such a judge.

Now, in answer to this, I observe, that though such an infallible judge should determine the sense of all obscure texts of Scripture (which neither the Pope nor Church of Rome have ever done), yet this would not be to understand the Scriptures, or to learn from the Scriptures, but only to rely on this infallible judge for the sense of Scripture. To understand the Scriptures, is to be able to give a reason, why I expound Scripture to such a sense, as that the words signify so, that the circumstances of the place, and the context and coherence of the words require it ; that the analogy of faith, and the reason and nature of things, will either justify such an interpretation, or admit no other. And an expositor, who can thus open our understandings, and not only tell us what the sense of Scripture is, but make us see that this is the true sense and interpretation of it, does indeed make us understand the Scripture. Thus Christ himself did, when he was risen from the dead. "He opened their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures," Luke xxiv. 45. But to be told that this is the true sense of Scripture, and that we must believe this is the sense, though we can see no reason why it should be thus expounded, nay, though all the reason we have tells us that it ought not to be thus expounded, no man

will say that this is to understand the Scriptures, but to believe the judge. No man can learn anything from a book, which he does not, and cannot understand ; and if men neither do, nor can understand the Scriptures, it is certain they can learn nothing from them : an infallible judge would teach as well without the Scriptures as with them, and indeed somewhat better, because then no man could have a pretence to contradict him ; and therefore if this be true, the holy Scripture deserves all those contemptible characters which the Romanists have given it ; for it is so far from improving and perfecting our knowledge, that itself cannot be known, and therefore is good for nothing. So that the obscurity of the Scripture makes it wholly useless to the great ends and purposes of the Christian religion, *viz.* to improve and perfect the knowledge of mankind in the necessary and essential doctrines of faith ; and therefore this can be no Gospel doctrine, because it makes the Gospel itself, considered as written, of no use.

Thus, if the Scripture be an imperfect rule, as the Romanists affirm, that it does not teach us the whole mind and will of God, but that we must learn even some necessary doctrines of faith from unwritten traditions, which nobody has the keeping of but the Church of Rome : this, I say, contradicts the great design of the Gospel, which is to improve and perfect knowledge ; for an imperfect rule of faith is, I think, as bad as no rule at all, because we can never trust it.

If you say, that though the Scripture itself be an imperfect rule, yet we have a perfect rule, because the defects of the Scripture are supplied by unwritten traditions ; and therefore we have the whole Gospel, and all the Christian knowledge delivered down to us, either in the written or unwritten rule : I answer,

1. If the Scriptures be an imperfect rule, then all Christians have not a perfect rule, because they have not the keeping of unwritten traditions, and know not what they are, and never can know what they are, till the Church is pleased to tell them ; and it seems, it was a very great while before the Church thought fit to do it. For suppose that all the new articles of the Council of Trent, which are not contained in Scripture, were unwritten traditions, fifteen hundred years was somewhat of the longest to have so considerable a part of the rule of faith concealed from the world ; and who knows how much of it is concealed still ? for the Church has not told us, that she has published all her unwritten traditions ; there may be a nest-egg left still, which in time may add twelve

new articles to the Trent Creed, as that has done to the Apostles' Creed.

So that if the Scripture be an imperfect rule of faith, the Church never had a perfect rule till the Council of Trent ; for a rule which is not known, is none at all, and nobody can tell whether our rule be perfect yet ; whether some more unwritten traditions may not start up in the next age, to make our faith more perfect than the Council of Trent itself has made it. Now if the design of the Gospel was to instruct men in all divine knowledge, can we think that our Saviour has given us such an imperfect rule, as needs to be supplied by unwritten traditions in every age ? especially when we consider that some of the greatest mysteries and most useful doctrines of the Christian religion (if the Church of Rome be in the right) were not written, or so obscurely, that nobody could find them in the Scriptures, till they were discovered by the help of unwritten traditions ; such as the supremacy of the Pope, the infallibility of Popes and General Councils, the worship of images, the invocation of saints, and the great glory and prerogatives of the Virgin Mary, the doctrine of purgatory, indulgences, the sacrament of penance, &c., as necessary doctrines as any that are recorded in Scripture, and the denial of which makes us all heretics and schismatics, as the Church of Rome says. Though thanks be to God, as far as appears, we are no greater heretics and schismatics than the Apostles were, unless they are excused for not knowing these necessary articles of faith, and we are heretics for denying them, since the Church of Rome, in the Council of Trent, has decreed and published them.

2. These unwritten traditions cannot supply the defects of a written rule, because they are of uncertain authority, and therefore not the objects, much less the rule, of a certain faith and knowledge. What is not written, but said to be delivered down from age to age by oral tradition, and kept so privately, that the Church of God never heard of it for several hundred years, can never be proved but by miracles, and they must be more credible miracles too, than the school of the eucharist, and the legends of the saints furnish us with ; and yet I know of no better the Church of Rome has. It is impossible to prove, that a private tradition cannot be corrupted ; it is unreasonable to think that anything which concerns the necessary articles of faith, or rules of worship, should be a private and secret tradition for several ages. Miracles themselves cannot

prove any tradition which is contrary to the written rule, and the catholic faith of Christians for several ages, as several of the Trent doctrines are ; nay, no miracles can prove any new article of faith, which was never known before, without proving that Christ and his Apostles did not teach all things necessary to salvation ; which will go a great way to overthrow the truth and certainty of the Christian faith : for miracles themselves can never prove, that Christ and his Apostles taught that which the Christian Church never heard of before ; which is either to prove that the whole world had forgot what they had been once taught, which I doubt is not much for the credit of tradition, or that the Church, for several ages, did not teach all that Christ taught, which is no great reason to rely on the teachings of the Church ; or to prove against matter of fact, that Christ and his Apostles taught that which nobody ever heard of, and I do not think a miracle sufficient to prove that true, which everybody knows to be false, or at least do not know it to be true, though they must have known it, if it had been true.

And does not every body now see, how improper unwritten traditions are, to supply the defects and imperfections of the written rule ? For they can never make one rule, because they are not of equal authority. A writing may be proved authentic, an obscure unwritten tradition cannot : and can any man think, that Christ would have one-half of his Gospel written, the other half unwritten, if he intended to perfect the knowledge of Christians ? For they cannot have so perfect a knowledge, because they cannot have so great certainty of the unwritten, as they have of the written Gospel. Writing is the most certain way to perpetuate knowledge ; and if Christ intended that his Church, in all ages, should have a perfect rule of faith, we must acknowledge the perfection of the written rule. The truth is, I cannot but admire the great artifice of the Church of Rome, in preaching up the obscurity and imperfection of the Scriptures, for she has hereby put it into her own power, to make Christian religion what she pleases ; for if the Scriptures be obscure, and she alone can infallibly interpret them ; if the Scriptures be imperfect, and she alone can supply their defects by unwritten traditions ; it is plain, that Christian religion must be what she says it is, and it shall be what her interest requires it to be. But whether this be consistent with our Saviour's design in publishing the Gospel, or whether it be the best way of improving the knowledge of mankind, let any impartial man judge.

5. An implicit faith, or believing as the Church believes, without knowing what it is we believe, can be no Gospel doctrine, because this, to be sure, cannot be for the improvement of knowledge, Some of the Roman doctors think it sufficient that a man believes as the Church believes, without an explicit knowledge of anything they believe; but the general opinion is, that a man must have an explicit belief of the Apostles' Creed, but as for everything else it suffices, if he believes as the Church believes, without knowing what the faith of the Church is; that is, it is not necessary men should so much as know, what the new articles of the Trent faith are, if they believe the Apostles' Creed, and resign up their faith implicitly to the Church.

Now this is a plain confession, that all the doctrines in dispute between us and the Church of Rome, are of no use, much less necessary to salvation; for if they were, they would be as necessary to be known, and explicitly believed, as the Apostles' Creed: and I cannot imagine, why we heretics, who believe the Apostles' Creed, and understand it as orthodoxly as they, may not be saved without believing the new Trent Creed; for if we need not know what it is, there seems to be no need of believing it; for I always thought, that no man can, and therefore, to be sure, no man need, believe, what he does not know. So that it seems, we know and believe all things, the explicit knowledge and belief of which, by their own confession, is necessary to salvation, except that one single point of the infallibility of the Church of Rome: believe but that, and ye need believe or know nothing more but the Apostles' Creed, and yet go to heaven as a good Catholic: which makes an implicit faith in the Church of Rome, as necessary as faith in Christ is.

But if the intent of the Gospel was to improve our knowledge, then Christ never taught an implicit faith, for that does not improve knowledge: and if the faith of the Church of Rome, excepting the Apostles' Creed, which is the common faith of all Christians, need not be known, then they are no Gospel doctrines, much less necessary articles of faith; for Christ taught nothing but what he would have known; and though the knowledge of all things which Christ taught, is not equally necessary to salvation, yet it tends to the perfecting our knowledge, and Christ taught nothing which a man need not know; which I think is a reproach to meaner masters, and much more to the eternal and incarnate Wisdom.

Secondly, The improvement and perfection of human nature consists in true holiness and virtue, in a likeness and conformity to God, and a participation in the Divine nature : and this is the great end of the Gospel to advance us to as perfect holiness as is attainable in this life. Christ indeed has made expiation for our sins by his own blood, but then this very blood of atonement does not only expiate the guilt of sin, but purges the conscience from dead works, that we may serve the living God ; for no sacrifice, not of the Son of God himself, can reconcile an impenitent and unreformed sinner to God, that is, can move God to love a sinner who still loves and continues in his sins ; which an infinitely holy and pure Being cannot do : indeed the expiation of sin is but one part of the work of our redemption ; for a sinner cannot be saved, that is, cannot be advanced to immortal life in the kingdom of heaven, without being born again, without being renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, after the image and likeness of God. For this new nature is the only principle of a new immortal life in us : an earthly sensual mind is no more capable of living in heaven, than an earthly mortal body. In both senses, “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption.”

The Church of Rome, indeed, has taken great care about the first of these, and has found out more ways of expiating sin, and making satisfaction for it, than the Gospel ever taught us ; whether they are so effectual to this purpose, let those look to it who trust in them ; but there is not that care taken to inculcate the necessity of internal holiness and purity of mind, and one would easily guess that there can be no great need of it in that Church, which has so many easy ways of expiating sin.

The true character of Gospel doctrines is, a doctrine according to godliness, the principal design of which is to promote true goodness ; all the articles of the Christian faith tend to this end, to lay great and irresistible obligations on us to abstain from every sin and to exercise ourselves in everything that is good, as we have ability and opportunity to do it : and therefore all doctrines which secretly undermine a good life, and make it unnecessary for men to be truly and sincerely virtuous, can be no Gospel doctrines. That there are such doctrines in the Church of Rome, has been abundantly proved by the late learned and reverend Bishop Taylor, in his *Dissuasive from Popery* ; which is so very useful a book, that I

had rather direct my readers to it, than transcribe out of it : my design leads me to another method ; for if I can prove that the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome naturally tend to evacuate the force of the Gospel itself, to make men good and holy ; every one will easily see that that can be no Gospel faith and worship, which sets aside the Gospel itself.

The whole doctrine of the Gospel either consists of the rules of holiness, or of the motives and instruments of it ; for the articles of the Christian faith are all of them so many motives to a good life : let us then consider how the faith and worship of the Church of Rome has made void the Gospel of our Saviour, as the Pharisees made void the law of Moses, by their tradition.

1. Let us begin then with the Gospel rules of holiness. It would be an endless thing here to take notice of the loose determinations of their famed and approved Casuists, of their doctrine of probable opinions, of the direction of the intention, by which means the very laws and boundaries of virtue and vice are in a great measure quite altered ; and, it may be, this would only make work for the Representer, and furnish out a fourth part of the Papist Misrepresented, if we venture to tell the world what has been the avowed doctrines of their great divines and Casuists. But whether such definitions be the doctrine of their Church or not, I am sure they are equally mischievous, if they be the doctrines of their confessors who have the immediate direction of men's conscience. Those who have a mind to be satisfied in this matter, may find enough of it in the Provincial Letters, the Jesuit's Morals, and Bishop Taylor's Dissuasive. It sufficiently answers my present design to take notice of some few plain things, which will admit of no dispute.

I have already shewn what a great value the Church of Rome sets upon an external righteousness, which is much more meritorious than a real and substantial piety and virtue. Now let any man judge whether this be not apt to corrupt men's notions of what is good ; to persuade them that such external observances are much more pleasing to God, and therefore, certainly, much better in themselves, than true Gospel obedience, than moral and evangelical virtues ; for that which will merit of God the pardon of the greatest immoralities, and a great reward ; that which supplies the want of true virtue, which compensates for sin, and makes men great saints, must

needs be more pleasing to God, than virtue itself is : and if men can believe this, all the laws of holiness signify nothing, but to let men know, when they break them, that they may make satisfaction by some meritorious superstitions.

Thus the doctrine of venial sins, which are hardly any sins at all, to be sure, how numerous soever they are, or how frequently soever repeated, cannot deserve eternal punishments, is apt to give men very slight thoughts of very great evils : for very great evils may come under the notion of venial sins, when they are the effects of passion and surprise, and the like. Indeed this very notion of venial sins is so perplexed and undetermined, that the priest and the penitent may serve themselves of it to good purpose. I am sure this distinction is apt to make men careless of what they think little faults, which are generally the seeds and dispositions to much greater ; such as the sudden eruptions of passion, some wanton thoughts, an indecorum and indecency in words and actions, and what men will please to call little venial sins, for there is no certain rule to know them by : so that while this distinction lasts, men have an excuse at hand for a great many sins, which they need take no care of ; they are not obliged to aim at those perfections of virtue which the Gospel requires ; and if they keep clear of mortal sins, they are safe, and that men may do, without any great attainments in virtue ; which does not look very like a Gospel doctrine, which gives us such admirable laws, which requires such great circumspection in our lives, such a command over our passions, such inoffensiveness in our words and actions, as no institution in the world ever did before. Whatever corrupts men's notions of good and evil, as external superstitions and the distinction between venial and mortal sins is apt to do, is a contradiction to the design of the Gospel, which is, to give us the plain rules and precepts of a perfect virtue.

Secondly, Let us consider some of the principal motives of the Gospel to a holy life, and see whether the Church of Rome does not evacuate them also, and destroy their force and power.

Now, 1. The fundamental motive of all, is the absolute necessity of a holy life ; that "without holiness no man shall see God," for no other argument has any necessary force without this. But the absolute necessity of a holy life to please God, and to go to heaven, is many ways overthrown by the Church of Rome, and nothing would more effectually overthrow the Church of Rome, than to re-establish this doctrine

of the absolute necessity of a good life. For were men once convinced of this, that there is no way to get to heaven, but by being truly and sincerely good ; they would keep their money in their pockets, and not fling it so lavishly away upon indulgences or masses ; they would stay at home, and not tire themselves with fruitless pilgrimages, and prodigal offerings at the shrines of some powerful saints ; all external, troublesome and costly superstitions would fall into contempt ; good men would feel that they need them not, and if bad men were convinced that they would do them no good, there were an end of them ; for the only use of them is to excuse men from the necessity of being good.

But this is most evident in their doctrine about the sacrament of penance, that bare contrition with the absolution of the priest, puts a man into a state of salvation. I do not lay it upon attrition, which is somewhat less than contrition, though the Council of Trent, if I can understand plain words, makes that sufficient with the absolution of the priest ; but because some men will unreasonably wrangle about this, I shall insist only on what is acknowledged by themselves, that contrition, which is only a sorrow for sin, if we confess our sins to a priest, and receive absolution, puts us into a state of grace. Now contrition, or sorrow for sin, is not a holy life, and therefore this doctrine overthrows the necessity of a holy life, because men may be saved by the sacrament of penance without it, and then I know no necessity there is of mortifying their lusts ; for if they sin again, it is only repeating the same remedy, confessing their sins, and being sorry for them, and receiving absolution, and they are restored to the favour of God, and to a state of salvation again. Nay, some of the Casuists tell us, that God has not commanded men to repent, but only at the time of death, and then contrition with absolution will secure their salvation, after a whole life spent in wickedness, without any other good action, but only sorrow for sin : and if men are not bound by the laws of God so much as to be contrite for their sins, till they find themselves dying, and incapable of doing any good, all men must grant, that a holy life is not necessary to salvation.

2. More particularly, the love of God in giving his own Son to die for us, and the love of Christ, in giving himself for us, are great Gospel motives to obedience and a holy life ; but these can only work upon ingenuous minds, who have already, in some measure, conquered the love of sin ; for where the

love of sin prevails, it is too powerful for the love of God ; but the holiness, and purity, and inflexible justice of the Divine nature, is a very good argument, because it enforces the necessity of a holy life ; for a holy God cannot be reconciled to wicked men ; will not forgive our sins, unless we repent of them, and reform them ; which must engage all men, who hope for pardon and forgiveness from God, to forsake their sins, and reform their lives : but the force of this argument is lost in the Church of Rome by the judicial absolution of the priest : for they see daily the priest does absolve them without forsaking their sins, and God must confirm the sentence of his ministers, and therefore they are absolved, and need not fear that God will not absolve them, when the priest has ; which must either destroy all sense of God's essential holiness and purity, and persuade them, that God can be reconciled to sinners while they continue in their sins, or else they must believe that God has given power to his priests to absolve those whom he could not have absolved himself : to be sure it is in vain to tell men, that God will not forgive sinners while they continue in their sins, if they believe the judicial authority of the priest to forgive sins ; for they every day absolve men who do not forsake their sins, and if their absolution be good, God must forgive them too ; and thus the holiness, and inflexible justice of God, loses its force upon good Catholics to reform their lives ; and therefore were there no other arguments against it, it is not likely that the judicial absolution of the priest, as it is taught and practised in the Church of Rome, should be a Gospel doctrine.

3. The death and sacrifice of Christ is another Gospel motive to holiness of life ; not only because he has now bought us with his own blood, and therefore we must no longer live unto ourselves, but to him who died for us ; but because his blood is the blood of the covenant, and the efficacy of his sacrifice extends no farther than the Gospel covenant, which teaches us to deny "all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." That is, no man can be saved by the blood of Christ, but those who obey the Gospel, which obliges all men, who hope to be saved by Christ, to the practice of an universal righteousness.

This the Church of Rome seems very sensible of, that none but sincere penitents and truly good men can be saved by the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross ; which gives no hope to sinners, who do not repent of their sins, and amend their

lives; and therefore she has found out a great many other ways of expiating sin, which gives more comfort to sinners. The sacrifice of the mass has a distinct virtue and merit from the sacrifice upon the cross; it is a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, to expiate especially the sins of those, for whom it is particularly offered; and thus those sins which are not expiated by the death of Christ upon the cross, are expiated by the sacrifice of the mass, and that by the bare *opus operatum*, by the offering this sacrifice of the mass itself, without any good motion in the person for whom it is offered: and thus the sacrifice of the mass destroys the virtue of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, to oblige men to holiness of life; for though none but sincere and reformed penitents are pardoned by the sacrifice of the cross, the sacrifice of the mass will expiate the sins of unreformed sinners, and then there is no need to reform our lives. Thus I am sure all men understand it, or they would never put their confidence in the mass-sacrifice; for if it does no more for us than Christ's death upon the cross, it might be spared, for it gives no new comforts to impenitent sinners.

They are very sensible, that holiness of life is necessary to entitle us to the pardon and forgiveness purchased by the death of Christ; but then the sacrifice of the mass, human penances, and satisfactions, and merits, the indulgences, seem on purpose contrived to supply the place of holiness of life; for nobody can imagine else what they are good for. Christ has by his death upon the cross, made a perfect atonement for the sins of all true penitent and reformed sinners; and therefore a true penitent, who according to the terms of the Gospel, denies all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," needs no expiation but the death of Christ: will they deny this? by no means! They grant, that all our sins are done away in baptism, merely by the application of Christ's death and passion to us; and therefore the death of Christ is a complete and perfect satisfaction for all sin, or else baptism, which derives its whole virtue from the death of Christ, could not wash away all sin: what use can there be then of the new propitiatory sacrifice of the mass, of human satisfactions, and merits, and indulgences? Truly none but this, that when our sins are expiated by the death of Christ, and the pardon of all our sins applied to us in baptism, the Gospel exacts a holy life from us, and therefore men forfeit the baptismal pardon of their sins by the blood of

Christ, unless they either live very holy lives, or make some other satisfaction for their not doing so : and for this purpose, the sacrifice of the mass, human penances, and satisfactions serve. It will not be unuseful, nor unpleasant, to draw a short scheme of this whole matter, which will explain this great mystery, and make it intelligible, which now appears to be nothing but nonsense and confusion.

Christ then has made a perfect atonement and expiation for sin : this is applied to us at baptism, wherein all our sins are forgiven ; and while we continue in this state of grace, we cannot be eternally damned, though we may be punished for our sins, both in this world and purgatory. But every mortal sin puts us out of the state of grace, which we were in by baptism, and till we be restored to the state of grace again, we must be eternally damned, because we have no right to the sacrifice and expiation of Christ's death : the only way in the Church of Rome to restore us to the state of grace, is by the sacrament of penance, and the absolution of the priest, which restores us to the same state which baptism at first put us into, and therefore very well deserves to be thought a sacrament : and thus we recover our interest in the merits of Christ's death, and therefore cannot be eternally damned for our sins ; but still it is our duty to live well, for the death of Christ does not excuse us from holiness of life, which is the condition of the Gospel ; and therefore if we are in a state of grace, and thereby secured from eternal damnation, yet if we live in sin, we must be punished for it, unless we can find some other expiation for sin than the death of Christ upon the cross, which still leaves us under the obligations of a holy life, and therefore cannot make such an expiation for sin, as shall serve instead of a holy life : now here comes in the sacrifice of the mass, human penance, satisfactions, indulgences :

For the sacrifice of the mass, as I observed before, does not serve the same end, that the sacrifice of the cross does : the sacrifice of the mass is a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead : but what sins is it a propitiation for ? For such sins for which men are to satisfy themselves ; that is, for all sins, the eternal punishment of which is remitted for the sacrifice of the cross. This is evident from their making the sacrifice of the mass a propitiatory sacrifice for the dead ; that is, for the souls in purgatory, who suffer there the temporal punishments of sin, when the eternal punishment is forgiven : the souls in hell are capable of no expiation, and

therefore an expiatory sacrifice for the dead, can be only for the souls in purgatory, and that is for the temporal punishment of sin, for which the sacrifice of the cross is no expiation; and the mass is in no other sense made a sacrifice for the living than for the dead; and therefore is not to expiate the eternal, but the temporal punishments of sin, as appears from hence, that the saying masses, or hearing masses, or purchasing masses, is reckoned among those penances men must do for the expiation of their sins, and yet they can, by all they do, only expiate for the temporal punishment of sin; and therefore masses for the living are only for the expiation of those temporal punishments of sin, for which the sacrifice of the cross made no expiation. And I shall be so civil at present, as not to inquire how the sacrifice of the cross, and the sacrifice of the mass, which are the very same sacrifice of the natural body and blood of Christ, come to serve such very different ends: that when Christ was sacrificed upon the cross, he expiated only for the eternal punishment of sin; when sacrificed in the mass, only for the temporal. I need add nothing to prove, that human penances, satisfactions, merits, indulgences, are only to expiate temporal punishment of sin, because it is universally acknowledged. Now if these temporal punishments be only in lieu of holiness and obedience, which the Gospel requires to entitle us to the expiation of Christ's death upon the cross, as I have already shewn: then it is evident to a demonstration, that the Church of Rome has overthrown the death and sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, considered as an argument of a holy life, by setting up the sacrifice of the mass, human penances, satisfactions, merits, indulgences, instead of the Gospel terms of obedience and holiness of life.

4. The intercession of Christ for us, at the right hand of God, is another powerful motive to holiness of life: it gives all the encouragement to true penitent sinners that can be desired; for "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is also a propitiation for our sins."* But then Christ mediates only in virtue of his blood; that is only upon the terms and conditions of the covenant of grace, which was sealed by his blood; that is, he mediates and intercedes only for true penitent sinners; which obliges us, as we hope to be heard by God, when we pray in

* 1 John ii. 2.

the name of Christ, truly and heartily to repent of all our sins, and to live a new life.

This the Church of Rome also seems very sensible of, that Christ, of his own accord, will not intercede for impenitent and unreformed sinners; that he who is the great Example, and the great Preacher of righteousness, will not espouse the cause of incorrigible sinners, who are very desirous of pardon, but hate to be reformed; and therefore they seem to think it as hopeless a thing to go immediately to a holy Jesus, as to appear before the tribunal of a just and righteous God, without a powerful advocate.

For this reason they have found out a great many other advocates and mediators, a great deal more pitiful and compassionate than Christ is, who by their interest in him, or their great favour with God, may obtain that pardon, which otherwise they could not hope for; such as the Virgin Mary, who is the mother of Christ, and therefore, as they presume, has as great interest in and authority over him, as a mother has over her son; besides those vast numbers of meritorious saints, whose intercessions cannot but prevail for those sinners whose cause they undertake.

And that this is the true reason of their addresses to saints and the Virgin Mary, though they will not speak out, is evident to any considering man: for will they say, that Christ, who became man for us, who suffered and died for us, who was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin; who did and suffered all this on purpose that he might be a merciful and compassionate High-Priest, and might give us the highest assurance of his tenderness and compassion for us: I say, can they suspect that such a High-Priest will not undertake to plead our cause, if we be such as, according to the terms of the Gospel, it is his office to intercede for? No Christian dare say this, which is such a reproach to our common Saviour, who hath bought us with his own blood; and therefore no Christian who thinks himself within the reach and compass of Christ's intercession, can need or desire any other advocate: but those who are conscious to themselves of so much wickedness, that they cannot hope the holy Jesus will intercede for them for their own sakes, have reason to procure some other favourites to intercede for them with their Intercessor; and to countenance the matter, they must recommend it to the practice of all Christians, and more than so, make it heresy to deny it. There is but one argument I know

of against this, that any should be so stupid, as to think that the intercession of the Virgin Mary, or the most powerful saints, can prevail with our Saviour to do that, which according to the laws of his own mediation, they know he cannot, and will not do : and this, I confess, I cannot answer, but yet so it is. And thus the intercession of Christ is made a very ineffectual argument to make men good ; for though Christ will intercede for none but true penitents, the Church of Rome has a great many other advocates that will, or at least she persuades people that they will.

5. Another great Gospel motive to a holy life, is the hope of heaven, and the fear of hell. As for the hope of heaven, that is no otherwise a motive to holiness of life, but upon a supposition of the necessity of holiness, that “ without holiness no man shall see God ;” but this you have already heard, is overthrown by the Church of Rome : and if men may go to heaven without holiness, I know no need of it for that purpose in this world.

But hell is a very terrible thing, to be condemned to endless and eternal torments with the devil and his angels ; but then the doctrine of purgatory does mightily abate and take off this terror : for though purgatory be a terrible place too, not cooler than hell itself, yet it is not eternal ; yet men who are mightily in love with their sins, will venture temporal punishments, though somewhat of the longest, to enjoy their present satisfactions ; especially considering how many easy ways there are for rich men to get out of purgatory ; those who have money enough to buy indulgences while they live, and masses for their souls when they die, need not lie long there, if the priests are not out in their reckoning : and yet it is so easy a thing for a good Catholic to get into purgatory ; especially if he take care frequently to confess himself, and receive absolution, or do not die so suddenly as to be surprised in any mortal sin, that hell seems to be very little thought of, or feared in the Church of Rome. Now I desire no better argument, that all these are not Gospel doctrines, than that they destroy the force of all those arguments the Gospel uses to make men good ; that is, they are a direct contradiction to the Gospel of Christ.

6. I shall name but one motive more, and that is the examples of good men : “ To be followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises ;” that “ being encompassed with such a cloud of witnesses, we should lay aside

every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us.”* Now this is a powerful argument, because they were men as we are, subject to the same temptations and infirmities; and therefore their examples prove, that holiness is a practicable thing; that it is possible for men to conquer all the difficulties of religion, and all the temptations in this life; and many times in them we see the visible rewards of virtue in great peace of mind, great assurances of the Divine favour, great supports under all adversities, and such a triumphant death, as is a blessed presage of a glorious resurrection.

But now in the Church of Rome, if there be any great and meritorious saints, as they call them, their extraordinary virtues are not so much for imitation, as for a stock of merits. The more saints they have, the less reason other men have to be saints, if they have no mind to it, because there is a greater treasure of merits in the Church to relieve those who have none of their own. The extraordinary devotion of their monasteries and nunneries (for so they would persuade the world, that there is nothing but devotion there), is not for imitation, and it is unreasonable it should, because nobody sees it; and it is impossible to imitate that recluse life, without turning the whole world into a monastery: but these religious societies furnish the Church with a stock of merits, out of which she grants indulgences to those who are not very religious; and it is plain, that if one man can merit for twenty, there is no need that there should be above one in twenty good. Herein indeed the members of the Church of Rome have the advantage of all other Churches (especially if they enter themselves into any religious confraternity, to partake in the merits of the society), that others can merit for them; and then if we can share in the merits of the saints, we need not imitate them: a Church which has saints to merit for them on earth, and to intercede for them in heaven, if she can but maintain and propagate a race of such meriting saints (which is taken care of in the institution and encouragement of monastic orders and fraternities), may be very indulgent to the rest of her members, who do not like meriting themselves. So that the principal motives of the Gospel to a holy life, as appear in these six particulars, lose their force and efficacy in the Church of Rome, and certainly those cannot be Gospel

* Heb. xii. 1.

doctrines, which destroy the great end of the Gospel, to make men good.

3. Nor do the Gospel means and instruments of holiness and virtue, escape better in the Church of Rome: as will appear in a very few words.

Reading and meditating on the holy Scriptures, is one excellent means of grace, not only as it informs us of our duty, but as it keeps a constant warm sense of it upon our minds, which nothing can so effectually do, as a daily reading of the Scripture, which strikes the mind with a more sacred authority, than any human discourses can do: but this is denied to the people of the Church of Rome, who are not allowed to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue for fear of heresy, which, it seems, is more plain and obvious in the Scriptures, than Catholic doctrines: but they should also have considered, whether the danger of heresy or sin be the greater; whether an orthodox faith, or a good life, be more valuable; and if denying the people the use of the Bible be the way to keep them orthodox, I am sure it is not the way to make them good; true piety will lose more by this, than the faith will get by it.

Thus constant and fervent prayer, besides that supernatural grace and assistance it obtains for us, is an excellent moral instrument of holiness: for when men confess their sins to God with shame and sorrow, when with inflamed devotions, they beg the assistances of the Divine grace, when their souls are every day possessed with such a great sense, awe and reverence for God, as he must have, who prays devoutly to him every day; I say, it is impossible such men should easily return to those sins, which they have so lately confessed, with such shame and confusion, and bitter remorse; that those who so importunately beg the assistance of the Divine grace, should not use their best endeavours to resist temptations, and to improve in grace and virtue, which is a profane mockery of God, to beg his assistance, that he will work in us, and with us, when we will not work: that those who have a constant sense and reverence of God, should do such things, as argue that men have no fear of God before their eyes.

But this is all lost in the Church of Rome, where men are taught to pray they know not what, and when men do not understand their prayers, it is certain such prayers cannot affect their minds, what other good soever Latin prayers may do them; and thus one of the most powerful instruments of piety and virtue, is quite spoiled by prayers in an unknown

tongue, which can no more improve their virtue than their knowledge.

Sorrow for sin is an excellent instrument of true repentance, as that signifies the reformation of our lives; for the natural effect of sorrow is, not to do that again, which we are sorry for doing; but in the Church of Rome, this contrition, or sorrow for sin, serves only to qualify men for absolution, and that puts them into a state of grace, and then they may expiate their sins by penances, but are under no necessity of forsaking them.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper, besides those supernatural conveyances of grace, which are annexed to it by our Saviour's institution, is a great moral instrument of holiness; it representing to us the love of our crucified Lord, the merit and desert of sin, the virtue of his sacrifice to expiate our sins, and to purge our consciences from dead works, and requiring the exercise of a great many virtues; an abhorrence and detestation of our sins, great and ardent passions of love and devotion, firm resolutions of living to him who died for us, forgiveness of enemies, and an universal love and charity to all men, especially to the members of the same body with us; but in the Church of Rome, this admirable sacrament is turned into a dumb show, which nobody can be edified with, or into a sacrifice for the living and the dead, which expiates sin, and serves us instead of a holy life, as I observed before.

External mortifications, and severities to the body, fastings, watchings, hard lodging, &c. are very useful instruments of virtue, when they are intended to subdue the flesh to the spirit, and to wean our minds from sensual enjoyments; but when they are intended to satisfy for our sins, not to kill them; to punish ourselves for our sins, that we may commit them more securely again, this is not a means to break vicious habits, and to conquer the love of sin, but only to conquer the fear of committing it.

This is enough to shew, how far Popery is from promoting the great design of the Gospel, to improve and perfect human nature and holiness, and were there no other argument against it, this were sufficient to me to prove, that it cannot be the religion of the Gospel of Christ.

A SHORT SUMMARY
OF THE
PRINCIPAL CONTROVERSIES
BETWEEN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE CHURCH OF ROME ;
BEING
A VINDICATION OF SEVERAL PROTESTANT DOCTRINES, IN
ANSWER TO A LATE PAMPHLET, ENTITLED, PROTESTANCY
DESTITUTE OF SCRIPTURE PROOFS.

THAT I have taken so little an occasion to write so big a book, I hope the reader, upon his perusal, will pardon. There is indeed a remarkable difference between us and our Roman adversaries in this matter ; they can answer great books in two or three sheets, if they vouchsafe to give any answer at all, which they begin to be weary of: we answer two or three sheets in large books ; but then we have very different ends in writing too ; they, to make a show of saying somewhat, to put by the blow by some few insignificant cavils ; we, not only to answer our adversaries, which might be done in very few words, but to instruct our people, which requires a more particular explication of the reasons of things. But I shall make no apology for my book, till I hear that it wants it ; for it may be, some may think it is as much too little, as others too big.

He begins very regularly with the state of the controversy between us, to prove sixteen Protestant tenets (as he calls them) by “ plain Scripture ; Scriptures, but so plain to us, for their doctrines, as they require to be yielded them by the Catholic Church for hers.” What will be thought plain by them, is a very hard matter to guess, when it seems, the second commandment itself is not thought by them a plain Scripture proof against image worship, and I despair of ever finding a

plainer proof in Scripture, for or against any thing. But I told him in answer to his Request (p. 17), that we desire no other proofs from them, but what we are ready to give, "either the express words of Scripture, or plain and evident consequence, or the silence of Scripture, to prove that any doctrine is not in it." And though they may reasonably demand of us what we demand of them, yet they cannot reasonably demand more: and whether I have not done him justice in this way, shall be examined again under the several articles of his Request. In the next paragraph he mightily despises the Answer, and concluded the pamphlet unworthy a public or special notice, and expected, if not more pertinent, yet at least more plausible replies to follow; and I can assure him, that he was very ill advised, that he did not despise and expect on; for his reply has given some credit and authority to that Answer, and has now produced a book, which if he be wise, he will despise too; though I hope it will convince him, that Protestants do not mean to expose their profession by silence, which I do not find them much inclined to at present.

But let us consider the state of the question. In Answer to the Request,* to prove some Protestant tenets by plain Scripture, I told him this was a false representation of our doctrine; for though we do make the Scripture the rule of our faith, yet we do not pretend to own no doctrine but what is contained in the express words of Scripture. Our Church teaches us, Art. 6, "that holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." Where our Church distinguishes between what is read in the Scripture, that is, contained in express words there, and what may be proved thereby, that is, by plain and necessary consequence, from what is expressly taught in Scripture; and yet confines such proof as this only to articles of faith, or what is thought requisite or necessary to salvation. And the true reason of this is, that the Church of England teaches the sufficiency of the holy Scriptures to salvation, which is the very title of this Article, and therefore all things necessary to be believed to salvation must be contained in express words in Scripture, or be proved thence by plain and evident consequence; which shews, that we are not strictly

* Answer to Request, p. 1.

obliged to prove any thing from Scripture, but what we teach for an article of faith, or as necessary to salvation. This is the reason why we demand a Scripture proof from the Church of Rome for the new articles of the Trent faith ; for if the belief of them be necessary to salvation, as they say they are, then either the Scriptures do not contain all things necessary to salvation, or they are bound to shew where these doctrines are contained in Scripture. For this reason the Church of England, which owns the sufficiency of the Scripture to salvation, rejects all those doctrines, which the Church of Rome, without any proof from Scripture, teaches as necessary to salvation ; and this we think reason enough to reject them, that they are not contained in Scripture, which contains all things necessary to salvation.

Now our author, and some of his size, who do not see half a consequence before them, think they have a mighty advantage of us, in demanding the same proofs from us to justify our rejecting their doctrines, which we demand of them to justify their belief of them : that is to say, as we demand of them a Scripture proof, that there is such a place as purgatory, they think, they may as reasonably demand of us a Scripture proof, that there is no such place as purgatory ; just with as much reason, as if one should tell me, that by the laws of England, every man is bound to marry at twenty years old, and when I desire him to shew me the law which makes this necessary, he should answer, though he cannot shew such a law, yet it may be necessary, unless I can shew him a law which expressly declares that it is not necessary : whereas nothing is necessary, but what the law makes so ; and if the law has not made it necessary, there is no need of any law to declare that it is not necessary. Thus the Protestant doctrine of the sufficiency of Scriptures to salvation, requires us to produce a plain Scripture proof for every thing which we believe necessary to salvation ; but it does not require a Scripture proof, that that is not necessary to salvation, which the Scripture has not revealed, nor made necessary to salvation : for if the Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, it is a sufficient proof that such doctrines are not necessary to salvation, which are not contained in the Scriptures : unless we think, that the Scripture must beforehand confute all possible heresies, which might arise in the Church, and tell us particularly in all points, what we must not believe, as well as what we must.

This I observed was the case, as to those articles of the Church of England, which are opposed to the corruptions and innovations of the Church of Rome, that they are negative articles, and a negative article only rejects such doctrines from being articles of faith, as are not contained in Scripture, and it is ridiculous to demand a plain Scripture proof, that such a doctrine is not in Scripture. We believe it is not there, because we cannot find it there, and those who pretend it is there, cannot shew it there ; which is proof enough, and all that the subject is capable of.

This is what our author attempts an answer to in the preceding paragraph ; and first, he says, "that those of the Thirty-nine Articles which are opposed to Catholic religion (so he calls the Popish corruptions of Christianity), contain affirmative propositions, or may be resolved into equivalent affirmatives." What then ? Is the dispute about the terms wherein the article is conceived, whether they be negative or affirmative ? Or about the reason, why it is either affirmed or denied, *viz.* that such a doctrine is not taught in Scripture ? For this is all I meant by a negative article, that we deny such a doctrine to be contained in Scripture. Now suppose I should say, there is no such place as purgatory, which is a negative proposition, or that purgatory is a late and fond invention, which is affirmative, what difference is there between them ? when they both resolve into this, that purgatory is not taught in Scripture ; and therefore the question is still the same, whether the article be expressed affirmatively or negatively, and no man can be bound to prove by plain and express Scripture, that purgatory is not taught in Scripture.

Well ! but "though for a negative, or every non-assent or suspense of assent, a reason may not be given or required ; yet for belief, for a solemn profession, subscription and swearing of that belief (whether it be of negatives or affirmatives), a reason may be assigned and required." What glorious and triumphant nonsense is here ? How does a negative article, and non-assent, come to be the same thing ? For we Protestants use to give our assent to negative articles : and why are not men bound to give a reason of their non-assent, as well as of their assent ? And how are they more bound to give a reason of their profession and swearing their non-assent, than they are of their bare non-assent ? And whoever dreamt, that men are not bound to give a reason of their non-assent, and of their profession of non-assent ? And lastly, what is all this to the

purpose of demanding express proofs of Scripture, that such doctrines, as suppose purgatory, or the invocation of saints, &c. are not taught in Scripture? And why is it not a sufficient reason of a non-assent, or declared and professed denial of such doctrines, that it does not appear, that they are taught in Scripture?

But the Request, he says, "proposed only affirmatives;" and they have been considered and answered already, and his defence shall be considered again without any fencing or tergiversation.

But the Thirty-nine Articles not only declare, "that the opposite affirmatives are not in Scripture (for they may not be there, and yet be true)," (but if they be not there, we cannot know they are true, much less can they be articles of faith, and necessary to salvation), "but also that they are rather, and plainly repugnant to Scripture;" this, I confess, does require a Scripture proof, that a doctrine is not only not in the Scripture, but repugnant to it; but then a plain and evident consequence from something else, which is taught in Scripture, is all the proof which can be expected in such cases, and this we are ready to give when our author shall demand it. And now would not any one wonder, how from these premises he concludes, "that he has shewn Protestants obliged to give Scripture reasons for their belief of negatives;" that is, if he will speak to the purpose, that we are obliged to prove from plain and express texts of Scripture, that those doctrines which we reject as unscriptural, are not contained in Scripture; we must prove from Scripture, that that is not in Scripture, which we say is not in it; which may be done indeed by a negative argument, from the silence of Scripture about it, but is not capable of a direct and positive proof.

Let us now take a review of his several Protestant doctrines, for which he demands a Scripture proof, and see wherein the answer was defective.

I. "Scripture is clear in all necessities to every sober inquirer."

In answer to this, I observed, that every plain text of Scripture proved its own plainness, and that as it needs no other proof, no more than we need a proof that the sun shines when we see it; so if we did not find it plain, no other argument or testimony could prove it to be plain: but this he takes no notice of, but only endeavours to weaken two Scripture testimonies, which, I said, do by a very easy and natural consequence, prove the plainness of Scripture; "for if the word of

God be a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our paths, then it must be clear, if light be clear, Psalm cxix. 105 ; if it be able to make men wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15, then it must be plain and intelligible in all things necessary to salvation :” to which he answers,* “that these texts do not reach the proposition to be proved : for if the word were a light to the prophet David’s feet, if all Scripture be given, that the man of God may be perfect, yet a perspicuity of Scripture in all necessities to every sober inquirer cannot be deduced thence, except every sober inquirer be a prophet, or a man of God, or at least subject to such :” as if none but Prophets or Apostles could understand the Scripture ? But I thought light had been visible to all men that have eyes in their heads : and I am sure the same prophet tells us, “that the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple : the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart : the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes,” Psalm xix. 7, 8. Is this spoken only of prophets too ? Are there no other souls to be converted, no other simple people to be made wise, no other hearts to be rejoiced, no other eyes to be enlightened, but only theirs ? And when St. Paul tells Timothy, “from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation” (which was the place I cited), does this prove, that none but a man of God (for which he exchanges it, though that is not in the 15th but 17th verse), can understand the Scriptures, when it seems, Timothy understood them, when he was a child ?

However, thus much he must grant in his own way, that the Scriptures are very intelligible in all things necessary to salvation ; for otherwise, a man of God, the pastors and teachers of the Church, could not understand them, if they be not so plain that they may be understood ; and if the Scriptures be plain and intelligible in themselves, then he must grant, that at least all men of parts, and learning, and industry, who are sober and honest inquirers, may understand them as well as divines, unless he will say, that divines understand them not by the use of their reason and wise consideration, but by inspiration and prophecy ; and then it is not the Scripture, but the inspired interpretation of it, which makes men wise unto salvation. At least he must grant, that the Scriptures can make any other man of God perfect, as well as the Pope ;

* Answer to Request, p. 2.

for this is not spoke of St. Peter and his successors only, but of Timothy, and any other man of God; and therefore there is no need, that all other bishops and pastors should depend on the Pope, as an infallible oracle.

Nay, if the Scriptures are able to make the man of God perfect in the discharge of his ministry, of which St. Paul here speaks, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," then the people also, who are to be taught, may be made to understand the Scriptures, the doctrines, reproofs, and instructions of it; for as the Scripture is the teacher's rule, so it is his authority too; and if the people cannot be taught to understand the Scriptures in things necessary to salvation, they cannot know that such things are in Scripture; which destroys the Divine authority of the preacher. For what he teaches without Scripture, can only have his own authority, or the authority of other men like himself: and yet no man can tell, whether what he teaches be in the Scripture, who cannot, in some measure, understand the Scripture himself: and if a Divine faith must be founded upon the authority of Scripture, which is the only Divine authority we now have; and no man can believe upon the authority of Scripture, who cannot understand it; then it is as necessary, that all things necessary to salvation should be so plain in Scripture, that all persons, at least with the help of a guide, should understand them; as it is, that all, even the meanest man, should know all things necessary to their salvation.

For it is a scandal to the Protestant profession to say, that we reject the authority of Church guides, which we own as well as the Church of Rome; only with this difference, that the Church of Rome will have men believe their guides without reason or understanding; we have guides not merely to dictate to us, but to teach us to understand: as the masters in other arts and sciences do; who explain the reasons of things to their scholars, till they attain to a great mastery and perfection of knowledge themselves: and if by the help of such a teaching, not an imposing guide, men may understand the Scripture in all things necessary to salvation, then the Scripture is plain and intelligible, though an unlearned man cannot understand it without a guide; as mathematical demonstrations are certainly plain, if anything be plain, though unskilful men cannot understand them without a master; but that is clear and plain in itself, which can be explained to every ordinary apprehension; and such we assert the Scriptures to be in all

necessaries. Learned men can by their own studies and inquiries understand the true sense of them; and the unlearned can be taught to understand them; and this is the use we make of our guides, not to submit our judgments to them without any understanding: but to inform our judgments, that we may be able to see and understand for ourselves. Thus our Saviour taught his disciples, "he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures;" thus the Apostles and primitive doctors instructed the world, by expounding the Scriptures to them, which does not signify merely to tell them what the sense of Scripture is, and requiring them to believe it; but shewing them out of the Scriptures, that this is, and must be the true sense of it; and we need not fear, that Protestancy should suffer anything from such guides as these, though the Church of Rome indeed has felt the ill effects of them.

II. "The secular prince hath all spiritual jurisdiction and authority immediately from and under God."*

Here, he says, "I behave myself, as if I were under apprehensions, and durst neither own nor reject this tenet;" and yet in my Answer,† I expressly shew, what the Church of England means by the king's supremacy in ecclesiastical causes; "which signifies no more than that the king is supreme in his own dominions, and therefore there is no power, neither secular nor ecclesiastic, above him; for if there were, he were not supreme." And this I said might be proved from Romans xiii. 1, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers:" to which he answers, that "this proves more than I grant. It proves ministering the word and sacraments to belong to the higher powers." How so? Yes, this it does, "unless ministering the word and sacraments be not a soul affair, be no act of power." Learnedly observed! because every soul must be subject to the higher powers, therefore the king has all power in soul affairs, and therefore of ministering the word and sacraments: but if every soul only signify every man (without excepting the Pope himself), then I suppose all ecclesiastics, as well as secular persons, are included in it; and if all must be subject to the king, then the king is supreme over all; but things are at a low ebb in the Church of Rome, when such silly quibbles must pass for arguments.

III. "Justification by faith alone (*viz.* a persuasion that we are justified), is a wholesome doctrine."

* F. Prot.

† Answer to Request, p. 3.

In answer to this, I denied that our Church teaches that justifying faith is a persuasion that we are justified. He grants, that some of the Church of England have condemned it (p. 4), but yet he may as justly charge us with it, as we charge the Church of Rome with doctrines contrary to their General Councils, and constant profession, and we grant he may; for if such things be done, they are very unjust both in him and us; we deny that we do any such thing, and have lately abundantly vindicated ourselves from such an imputation; let him do as much for himself if he can. But Cranmer was of his mind, "by whom the Articles were devised;" but how does that appear? and if he were, what is that to us, when there is no such thing in our Articles? Will he allow the Council of Trent to be expounded according to the private opinions of every bishop that was in it? "The Antinomians plead the doctrine of the 11th Article, as the parent of their irreligion," and so they do the Scriptures: and what then? Will he hence infer, that the Scriptures countenance Antinomianism, because they allege Scripture for it? And why then must this be charged upon our Articles? Though what some may have done I cannot tell, but Antinomians do not use to trouble themselves with our Articles. "But the strictest adherers to the primitive Reformers in doctrine (the Puritans) assert this Solifidian parenthesis, as the genuine and literal sense of justification by faith alone, and of the 11th Article." Why are Puritans "the strictest adherers to the primitive Reformers in doctrine?" But we need not ask a reason of his sayings, who understands nothing about what he speaks: for the Puritans did not and do not believe, "that justifying faith is a persuasion that we are justified," but they place justifying faith in an act of recumbency on Christ for salvation, and dispute vehemently against his notion of it. But he says, "I might have given them a text asserting, what I confess our Church teaches, *viz.* that justification by faith only is a wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, which intimates no necessity of repentance to justification, nor of the sacraments." Yes it does, and of good works too, as the conditions of our justification, though not as the meritorious causes of it; for all this our Church comprehends in the notion of a living faith, which alone justifies; and then I suppose as many texts as there are, which attribute our justification to faith, so many proofs there are, that justification by faith alone, as opposed to all meritorious works, is a wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

IV. "The substance of bread and wine remains after, what it was before, sacerdotal consecration."

Here he takes no notice of any one word, which I returned in answer: the sum of which is, that the material substance before and after consecration is the same, that is, that they are bread and wine still, but by virtue of Christ's institution, after consecration, they are not mere bread and wine, but a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death, and to such as rightly and worthily, and by faith receive the same, "the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ," as our Church teaches: and this I proved must be the sense of the words of institution, "This is my body;" and urged such arguments for it, in short, as he durst not name again, much less pretend to answer: but instead of that, he endeavours to prove (p. 5), that the words of institution, "This is my body, literally understood, do expressly prove, that the substance of bread does not remain at all after consecration: for the eucharist is Christ's body and blood, which if substantially bread and wine, it cannot really be. A change less than that of the substance of the elements, is insufficient to render them really and truly what the text says they are after consecration."

But did not I give him my reasons, why these words could not be understood literally of the natural body and blood of Christ? And is it enough then for him to say, that in a literal sense, they must signify a substantial change of the bread and wine into Christ's natural body and blood, without answering what I urged against it? And yet, in a literal sense, it cannot signify so: for if *this* refers to the bread, which our Saviour took, and blessed and brake (and it can refer to nothing else), then the literal sense of the words is, "This bread is my body;" and if bread be the body of Christ, then the substance of the bread cannot be changed, for bread cannot be the body of Christ, if it be not bread. Let him choose which he will; either *this* signifies *this bread*, or it does not: if it does, then the bread cannot be substantially changed; for the bread is the body of Christ, and therefore is bread still, is bread and the body of Christ too; if it does not, then how does he prove, that the words of consecration in a literal sense transubstantiate the bread into the body of Christ? For *this* does not signify the bread, and therefore *this is my body* cannot signify that the substance of bread is transubstantiated into Christ's

body. I wonder our author is not ashamed at this time of day to talk at this rate, after so many excellent books as have been written upon this argument ; to save myself any farther trouble, I shall direct my reader to the late "Dialogues about the Trinity and Transubstantiation, and the Discourse of the Holy Eucharist in the two great points of the Real Presence, and the Adoration of the Host," where he will find abundant satisfaction also to the two next points, which follow.

V. "Our Lord's presence in the eucharist, is merely gracious and influential, and if more, only to the faithful."

In answer to this, I shewed him what we meant by Christ's presence in the eucharist, "that he is so present, that his body and blood, with all the benefits of his death and passion, are exhibited to worthy receivers, as much as he could have been, had we eat his natural flesh, and drank his blood,"* which is somewhat more than the mere influences of his grace. But he says, "I assert our Lord's eucharistical presence not to be substantial;" that is, I suppose, that the natural substance of his body is not there, and therefore that he is not corporally present, and this indeed I do assert. "Therefore (says he), unless entirely absent, our Lord must be present in the eucharist by grace and influence only: what is there besides substance and efficacy belonging to our Saviour's body and blood? No colour of Scripture is produced for this Zuinglian proposition."

If he will allow no medium between Christ's corporeal and substantial presence, and his grace and influence; since it is demonstrable, that he is not corporally present, we must in this sense allow, that he is present only by his grace and influence, as that is opposed to a corporeal presence. And all men must allow this, who deny transubstantiation, or consubstantiation. But "what is there besides substance and efficacy belonging to our Saviour's body and blood?" I answer, there can be nothing naturally belonging to any body besides its substance, and natural virtues and powers, which he calls its efficacy; but by institution there may; and we take the sacrament of the Lord's supper to be an institution, and therefore not to have a natural, but instituted virtue and efficacy. For the very notion of an institution is, that all the virtue and efficacy of it is not owing to nature, but to the will and appointment of God. Whatever is a natural power, is no insti-

* Answer to Request, p. 5.

tution, no sacrament ; for the effect there, is wholly owing to nature, not to God's appointment, which acts by a power and influence superior to nature. Which, I think, is little less than a demonstration, that the natural body and blood of Christ is not substantially present in the eucharist ; for whatever efficacy and virtue we attribute to eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ, it is either a natural effect of this eating the body, and drinking the blood of Christ, or it is not. If it be, then it is no sacrament, which works not by the powers of nature, but of institution. If it be not, what need is there of Christ's bodily presence in the sacrament ? When a sacramental body of Christ, consecrated bread and wine, to represent and exhibit his broken body and his blood shed for us, by virtue of an institution, may be as effectual to all the ends and purposes of a sacrament, as his natural body could be ; which can have no sacramental efficacy, but by virtue of an institution.

The benefits we expect from this sacramental feeding on Christ's body, is an interest in the merits of his death and passion, *viz.* the forgiveness of our sins, the communications of his grace and Spirit, and a right to immortal life. Now I would desire to know, whether these are the natural effects of a corporeal eating Christ's natural body ? He purchased all this for us, indeed, by his death and passion ; but is pardon of sin, which is God's free and gracious act, incorporated with Christ's natural body ? And will a corporeal eating of his body communicate it to us ? Do the communications of grace, and spiritual life, flow from the body, or from the Spirit of Christ ? Is it the contact of his body, that makes our bodies immortal, or the inhabitation of his Spirit in us ? What is that efficacy then, which he attributes to Christ's natural body, and supposes to be inherent in it ? A natural efficacy, such as can belong to human bodies, signifies nothing to the purposes of a sacrament, and there can be no other efficacy inherent in Christ's natural body ; unless he will say, that pardon of sin, and spiritual grace, and a power of making other bodies immortal, are the inherent and essential properties of Christ's body.

But suppose it were so ; how can the mere presence of Christ's natural body in the sacrament, which we neither see, nor touch, nor eat, communicate all these divine virtues to us ? For if it be by natural communication, it must be by contact ; for bodies have no other way of working upon each other ; and yet they will not allow, that we touch the body of Christ, no

more than that we see it ; or that we break it between our teeth, or chew it, or digest it in our stomachs, that is, they will not allow, that we naturally eat it ; and then how can it naturally communicate its virtues to us ?

So that though the natural body of Christ were present in the sacrament, those divine graces we expect from it, must be the effects of a sacramental institution, not of nature ; and therefore the natural presence of Christ's body is of no use in the sacrament ; for God may as well annex all the benefits of his death and passion to the sacramental signs of his body and blood, as to his natural body ; and the power and efficacy of the institution will be the same either way. And when the natural presence of Christ's body in the eucharist is so absolutely impossible, such a contradiction to the sense and reason of mankind, and of no use to the purposes of a sacrament, but what may as well be otherwise supplied ; and the sacramental eating of Christ's body in efficacious signs is so easy and intelligible, and by the power of an institution equally effectual, and so agreeable to the nature of all other institutions and sacraments, both of the Old and New Testament, what should incline men to expound those words of our Saviour, "This is my body," of his natural body, contrary to all the sacramental forms of speech used in Scripture, did they not think it meritorious to believe impossibilities and contradictions.

To return then a more direct answer to our author's question, "what there is besides substance and efficacy belonging to our Saviour's body ?" I answer, by nature there is nothing else, but by institution there is ; for there is the sacrament of the Lord's body, which is neither the natural substance, nor the natural efficacy of his body, but a sacramental communion in the merits and efficacy of his death and passion, which is a spiritual eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ. And since he wants Scripture for this, I will give him a very plain text, 1 Cor. x. 16 : "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ?" Thus St. Paul explains what our Saviour said, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," by this is the communion of Christ's body and blood : that is, that those who by faith partake of the sacramental bread and wine, do communicate in the body and blood of Christ.

This is a different thing from the mere influences of his grace ; for it is our interest and communion in his sacrifice,

which is the meritorious cause and spring of all Divine influences and communications: we must be mystically and spiritually united to Christ to have communion in the sacrifice of his body and blood, and then we receive the fresh supplies of grace from him, which are the purchase of his death, and the effect of our union to him; and this communion with the body and blood of Christ, we receive in the Lord's Supper, which is instituted by Christ, for that very purpose, and therefore it is called the communion of the body and blood of Christ; because it is the sacrament of our union to him, whereby we communicate in his body and blood; and if this be Zuinglianism, I see no help for it, but we must be contented to be Zuinglians.

VI. "Adoration of the eucharist (*i.e.* of our Saviour under the species of bread and wine), is idolatry."

I answered: "There was no such proposition as this taught in the Church of England. We teach, indeed, that bread and wine in the eucharist remains bread and wine after consecration, and that to adore bread and wine is idolatry: to adore our Saviour is no idolatry, but to adore bread and wine for our Saviour, may be as much idolatry, as to worship the sun for God."

Instead of answering this, he tell us, "This blasphemous tenet is taught by our Church," and which is a little worse, is practised by theirs. "For the majority of our pretended bishops did vote for the test, and do all of them take it," and I hope they will keep it too. That it is a canon of our General Council, the Parliament; and therefore it is very good law, and that is all we desire for our religion from Parliaments, and thank God that we have it; and since they are a General Council, may they insist upon their infallibility. But what is the matter with the test? Why, "it declares our adoration of the eucharist (which is the adoration of nothing but Jesus Christ) to be idolatry." Is the eucharist then nothing but Jesus Christ? Does the Council of Trent say so? Is this the doctrine of any of their schoolmen, canonists, or divines? Nay, will this author venture to say, that the eucharist is nothing but Jesus Christ himself? Which is speck and span new Popery, if this be the doctrine of the Church of Rome. No! he does not, dares not say, that the eucharist is nothing but Jesus Christ; but he says "that the adoration of the eucharist, is the adoration of nothing but Jesus Christ." But what palpable nonsense is this? For if the eucharist be some-

thing, which is not Jesus Christ, then the adoration of the eucharist must be the adoration of something, which is not Jesus Christ. And yet, though we should suppose the doctrine of transubstantiation to be true, yet the natural flesh and blood of Christ, according to the doctrine of the Council of Trent, though it be present in the sacrament, is not the sacrament. For there can be no sacrament of the eucharist without the species of bread and wine: and yet the Council* of Trent decrees, that the worship of *latria*, which is due to the true God, be given to this most holy sacrament: and that we might know, what they meant by the sacrament, they tell us, it is that which is instituted by Christ, to be received or eaten, which certainly is the species of bread and wine: for they being sensible, how absurd it is to worship what we eat, to prevent this, they tell us, that it is nevertheless to be adored, because it is instituted to be received, or eaten. The reason indeed they give for it is, because Christ is present at this sacrament; but though the presence of Christ be the reason of this adoration, yet the whole sacrament is the object, which is not merely the natural body and blood of Christ, but the species of bread and wine, under which is contained the body and blood of Christ; and therefore to adore the sacrament, is not to adore nothing but Jesus Christ, for the sacrament is somewhat more.

But then if the doctrine of transubstantiation be false, they have no other object of their worship but bread and wine; and thus the Church of England believes, and thus our General Council the Parliament, which made the test, believed, and thus all men, who dare trust their own senses and reason, believe; and if it be blasphemy to teach, that the worship of bread and wine is idolatry, some of the most learned divines of the Church of Rome have been guilty of this blasphemy, and I should be glad to hear what our author's opinion is of it.

VII. "All Christians, whenever they communicate, are obliged to receive in both kinds."

For this I urged the express words of institution,† which do as expressly command us to drink of the cup, as to eat of the bread; so that if there be any command in Scripture to receive the bread, there is the same command to receive the

* Council. Trid. Sess. 7. [Sess. 13.] de Eucharistia, cap. 5. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 806. Lut. Par. 1672.] † Answer to Request, p. 7.

cup : nay indeed, as if our Saviour had purposely intended to prevent this sacrilegious taking away of the cup from the people ; whereas in delivering the bread, he only says, "Take, eat ;" when he blessed and delivered the cup, he expressly commanded, "Drink ye all of it." And I further argued from the nature of the eucharist, which as it was instituted in both kinds, so it is not a complete sacrament without it : and yet our author rubs his forehead, and confidently tells his readers ; "Nor for this point can a Scripture command be discovered in the answer. Though the thirtieth Article affirms, that both parts of the Lord's sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike." What he means by this, I cannot guess ; for if he will not allow an express institution to be a Scripture proof, I despair of ever finding a Scripture proof for any thing ; unless he can tell me, what proof there can be of an institution, but the words of institution : does this institution then contain a command to receive the eucharist ? If it does not, how does he prove, that all Christians are bound to receive the eucharist ? If it does, then "Take, eat," is a command to receive the bread : and by the same reason, "Drink ye all of this," is a command to all to receive the cup ; and both these being a part of the same feast, and commanded at the same time, our Church had reason to say, that both parts of the Lord's sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christian men alike. The Church of Rome thinks the words of institution a plain and necessary command to consecrate in both kinds, without which they grant it is not a sacrament ; now what other command have they for consecrating, than we have for receiving in both kinds ? The words of institution are all that we have about this matter ; and let them give me a reason, how the same words come to signify consecration, but not receiving in both kinds ? Nay, they grant that the priest who consecrates, must receive as well as consecrate in both kinds ; and yet the institution is in the same form of words, without making any distinction between the priest and the people ; and how the same words should command the priest to receive in both kinds, and not the people, is somewhat mysterious. I am apt to think, that the Fathers of the Council of Constance,* who decreed the communion in one kind with a *non obstante* to our Saviour's

* Concil. Constant. Sess. 13. [Ibid. vol. 12. p. 100.]

institution, did suspect, that there was a Scripture proof for communion in both kinds, or there had been no need to have made an exception to our Saviour's institution, and to have set up the authority of the Church against it. The Church of Rome allows, that it is lawful for the people to communicate in both kinds, and have reserved this authority, of granting such a liberty, to the Pope: now how can it be lawful, unless Christ has allowed it? and where has he allowed it, unless in the words of institution? and they prove more than an allowance, even a command; if, "Drink ye all of this" be of the imperative mood.

VIII. "Chastity deliberately vowed, may be inoffensively violated."

This, I said, is no doctrine of our Church, nor are Protestants now concerned in it, though some of the monks and nuns at the beginning of the Reformation were: and though I did not undertake a just defence of the marriages of such devoted persons, yet I offered several things in apology for them; and said so much, that our author did not think fit to make any reply to it, but only answers to my denial, that this is a doctrine of our Church: he says, "This proposition is a doctrine of the Answerer's Church, except his be not the same Church with Edward the VIth's, or the 32nd Article have another sense, than when composed by Cranmer: for all bishops and priests, then in the Western Church, had deliberately vowed chastity, and the Article says, it is lawful for them to marry, which certainly violates their vow. No Scripture is alleged justifying a tenet, so impure, so perfidious."

Thus, by consequence, he proves "that it is the doctrine of our Church, that chastity deliberately vowed, may be inoffensively violated;" because in King Edward VI. and Archbishop Cranmer's days, it was the doctrine of this Church, that the bishops and priests then in being, who had deliberately vowed chastity, might, notwithstanding, marry. But suppose this was not the doctrine in King Edward's days, what becomes then of his consequence? And yet this is the truth of the case. For the Article then only taught, that "bishops, priests, and deacons, are not commanded to vow the state of single life without marriage, neither by God's law are they compelled to abstain from matrimony:" but there is not one word, whether those who were bishops and priests at that time, and were under the vow of celibacy (though every priest, as a priest, was not by the laws of this Church, bound to undertake such

a vow, though they were forbid by the canons to marry), might marry or not. For though the Article asserts, that they were not compelled by God's law, to abstain from matrimony; yet it does not say, that they could not debar themselves this liberty by voluntary vows; or that, if they had done so, they might inoffensively break those vows, which is a very different question. Indeed, in Queen Elizabeth's reign, in the Convocation held at London, 1562, this Article is enlarged. "Bishops, priests, and deacons, are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage. Therefore it is lawful also for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness." But this Article does not say, that those bishops and priests, who are entangled with a vow of celibacy, might lawfully marry, but only their being bishops and priests was no hindrance to their marriage: whether there was any other impediment, it concerned them to consider; but these obligations of vows, which any of them were then under, being a personal thing; the present decision of that controversy was not thought fit to be made an article of religion. So that though some particular persons were at that time concerned in this question, yet the doctrine of our Church never was concerned in it; for there never was any synodical definition of it; and therefore there is no need of producing Scripture proofs for it. But yet notwithstanding this, I am far from condemning those bishops and priests, and nuns and friars, who did then marry; for I am sure a chaste marriage is more acceptable to God, than an impure celibacy: and those abominations which were discovered at the dissolution of monasteries, were enough to make men abhor such vows of chastity, as he calls them: and I am very much of the opinion, that it were still better for priests to marry, than to debauch their penitents or converts. Thus much for his "impure and perfidious tenet."

IX. "All Christian excellencies are commanded."

This, I told him, I thought St. Paul had determined, Philip. iv. 8. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest," &c. "think on these things." For if these general expressions do not comprehend all Christian excellencies, I know not what does. To this he answers, "Unless, besides comprehending, it command them, that Scripture will not prove the tenet." And the mode of expression (that is, its being in the imperative mood, "think on these things") does

not prove it to be a command, "because it is common to an exhortation, as well as precept." Suppose this, then at least it may be a command, as well as an exhortation, and he can never prove, that it is not a command, and therefore can never confute any man, who says it is a command. But suppose it be an exhortation; I thought that the exhortations of the Gospel, had always included a command; and I desire one instance of an exhortation in Scripture, which relates to things necessarily good or evil, which does not include a command. Indeed the style of the Gospel does not run in the form of laws, but of exhortatory commands, enforced with reasons and arguments to persuade; and it is an effectual way to baffle all the precepts of the Gospel, if such exhortations as are made in common to all Christians, have not the force of a command.

But I observed farther, "that whatever virtues are commanded, we must always reckon, that the heights and perfections of those virtues are commanded, for God can command nothing less than a perfect virtue;" and if this be true, then all Christian excellencies must be commanded; unless they be such excellencies as are no virtues, which I fear may be the case. All Christian virtues are commanded in Scripture, without any bounds or limitations set to our duty; and I always thought, that justice, and goodness, and charity, meekness and humility, temperance and chastity, the love of God and men, did signify perfect virtues, and a perfect virtue must be perfect in degrees, as well as in its kind; and the Gospel is so far from limiting our duty, that it makes the Divine nature itself our pattern and example: that we must be "followers of God," *μιμηταί*, imitators of God, "like dear children:" and that we must be "perfect, as our Father which is in heaven is perfect;" which advances our duty to the utmost possible attainments in virtue.

But then I added, that the attainment of the highest perfections in virtue, is not made the necessary condition of our salvation. Though a perfect virtue be commanded, yet for Christ's sake, a sincere, though imperfect, obedience shall be accepted. But the more perfect and excellent virtue, shall have the more perfect and excellent reward: which is reason enough for us to aspire after the greatest perfections. And yet those degrees of perfection, which we are bound to attain to, must bear some proportion to what we have received from God. For "to whom much is given, of them shall be

much required." Which shews, that such attainments as bear proportion to our receipts, shall be exacted from us as a just debt ; which may make different degrees of virtue in different men matter of strict duty.

This, our author says, "imports that proportion, not equality, must be in our accounts to our abilities." This I do not well understand ; for an equal proportion is an equality. But this, he says, "does not agree with this doctrine, that we must always reckon the heights and perfections of virtues as commanded." His reason for it is this : "the account corresponds to our abilities (so sure does the command), but all abilities are not the same in all ; how then can God's commands be so to all, as they are, if he always enjoins the heights and perfections of virtues ?"

The account, he says, corresponds with our abilities, and therefore the command must : but how does he prove this ? God will accept of us, according to our abilities, which is an act of grace and favour, and owing to the merits and intercession of Christ ; and therefore his commands too, which are the eternal and unalterable rules of righteousness, must be proportioned to our abilities ; as if God might not in grace and mercy accept of less than in justice he can require ; or as if it became a holy and perfect being to command less than a perfect virtue.

"But all abilities are not the same : how then can God's commands be so to all ?" that is, the same to all men. And are not his commands the same to all men ? Do his commands differ, as men's abilities do ? How many several gospels, and several laws then must we have ? And where do we find these several commands proportioned to men's several abilities ? We have but one Gospel, that I know of, and the laws of it are the same to all ; and it is necessary that it should be so, that all men may know, that they are bound to be as good as they can ; and not absolve themselves from any degrees of virtue, as above their abilities ; and therefore not commanded them by God : this is what God will do himself, when he comes to judge the world : he will mercifully consider, whether men have done what they could, and will accept of a little, when it is their best ; but we must know, that it is our duty to do all the good we can, and therefore that the law requires the most perfect virtue : which will engage us to do our best, and use our utmost endeavours to please God ; and then depend on his grace to accept our sincere endeavours, instead of perfection.

Had I indeed said, that God had made the heights and per-

fections of virtue absolutely necessary to the salvation of all men, then he might have confuted me from our Saviour's rule of proportion, "to whom much is given, of them shall be much required:" but this I expressly denied, "that every man should be damned, who does not attain to the highest perfections:" and expressly affirmed, "that a sincere Christian shall be saved, notwithstanding his many defects, but our rewards shall be proportioned to our several degrees and attainments in virtue." That the most perfect virtue shall have the most excellent reward. And this is enough to confound the pretence of merit, and works of supererogation; especially that senseless doctrine of one man's meriting for another; which is the foundation of Popish indulgences. For if the most perfect virtue be matter of duty, and under command, how is it possible, that any man can do more than his duty? unless he can do something better than the best. And if our reward be proportioned to our best actions, what redundancy of merits can there be, when all the good we do is so amply rewarded?

Thus, I observed, our Church confuted the Popish doctrine of supererogation, from what our Saviour tells his disciples, "When ye have done all things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants." To this our author answers, "If to supererogate did signify (with Catholics) to profit God, then the 14th Article (condemning the teachers of works of supererogation of arrogance and impiety) had been solidly founded on, When you have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants. But we meaning no such thing, the Article perverts Scripture." This is an admirable answer, which does somewhat more than pervert, for it ridicules the text. For might not the disciples have answered our Saviour, as this disputer does? We are not so silly, as to think we can profit God, but yet we may supererogate, and deserve some thanks from him. It is true, God being infinitely happy and perfect in himself, we can make no addition to him, and therefore cannot, in a strict sense, profit him; nor therefore could our Saviour understand it in this sense; but as that servant may be said to profit his master, and to deserve thanks, who does more than is his duty, so might we be said to be profitable servants, could we also supererogate, or do more than is our duty; and here our Saviour's argument lies; that when we have done all that is commanded us, all the good that we can possibly do, yet we must confess ourselves unprofitable servants, because we have done nothing

but what was our duty : and if the Apostles themselves did, and could do, no more than was their duty, I think our Church might very well charge these teachers of works of supererogation with arrogance and impiety ; if to advance themselves above the Apostles be arrogance, and to make God a debtor to them be impiety.

But that our people may a little understand the weight and moment of this controversy, it will be necessary briefly to unriddle it.

Of what consequence the doctrine of purgatory is in the Church of Rome, is sufficiently known ; for a Church which can persuade people, that without her help, they must be damned for some hundred or thousand years (for purgatory is nothing else but a temporal damnation, as hell is eternal ; which is the only difference between them), must needs have a greater authority over all sorts of persons, who are conscious to themselves that they do not live so innocently as to be out of danger of purgatory : but the doctrine of purgatory itself could do the Church no service, had she not the power of indulgence to remit the pains of purgatory ; and yet indulgences are owing to the stock of merits, which the Church has the keeping and disposal of ; and yet there can be no merits without some works of supererogation ; and there can be no works of supererogation, if no man can do more than what is commanded, than what is his duty to do : for when we do no more than our duty, we must confess ourselves to be unprofitable servants, as that is opposed to merit : for no man merits merely by doing his duty. And this occasions this dispute, whether all Christian excellencies are commanded ? For if we can do no good thing, but what is commanded, there is no room left for merits, nor works of supererogation ; and then there can be no stock of merits to be the fund of indulgences, and then purgatory will be so uncomfortable a doctrine, that no man will trust to it, but will think it his interest to live virtuously, that he may escape both hell and purgatory, and go to heaven when he dies ; and then the Church of Rome will lose her authority, and her gainful trade together.

This is the plain state of the case ; and therefore to do the Church of Rome right, she principally attributes merit to such good works, as she calls them, which God has nowhere commanded ; but whether these be Christian excellencies or no, would be considered. The monkish vows of poverty, celibacy, and absolute obedience to their superiors, are thought a state

of perfection and merit ; and if they be so, these are works of supererogation indeed, for they are nowhere commanded by God ; but I confess, I cannot understand the excellency of them, especially not as practised in the Church of Rome.

It is an argument of a great and excellent mind, to live above this world, and to despise all the charms and flatteries of it ; but what virtue it is to renounce the possession of any thing in this world I cannot tell : it is in itself no virtue, that I know of, to be poor, and therefore it can be no virtue to choose poverty. The world was made for the use of man, and to use it well is an argument of virtue ; but merely to have nothing in the world is none : to bear want with a patient mind, and a quiet submission to the Divine Providence is a virtue ; but to choose want, is none : much less is it any virtue to renounce our private possessions, to live plentifully upon a common stock, and to be as intent in enriching a monastery, as any man can be to advance his private fortunes ; which is no great argument of a contempt of the world. And no more is it, to renounce all honest and industrious ways of living, as some do, and to turn imperious and godly beggars, and live deliciously on the spoils and superstition of the people.

Celibacy itself is no virtue, for then marriage, which is the ordinance of God, and a Popish sacrament, must be a vice. For there is no virtue, strictly so called, but is opposed to some vice ; and celibacy is opposed to nothing but marriage : and therefore we must seek for the virtues of celibacy, not merely in a vow against marriage, which is no virtue ; but as it signifies a great mortification to all bodily pleasures, and is a means to advance us to a more divine and heavenly state of mind : and every degree of virtue we attain to, shall receive a proportionable reward : and thus celibacy, though it be not a state of perfection itself, yet may advance us to a more perfect state, and if we are the better men for it, we shall have the greater reward. But to vow celibacy, and to burn with lust, and to practise all the impurities of the stews ; to renounce marriage, and to defile wives and virgins, and still to call this a more perfect state than marriage, is a work of supererogation indeed, but whether it be supererogating virtue or vice, God will judge ; who has forbid all uncleanness, and instituted marriage, not only for the propagation of mankind, but as a remedy against lust.

To vow absolute obedience to any creature, without reserving to ourselves a judgment, whether what he commands be good

or evil, is so far from being a state of perfection, that it is an encroachment upon the Divine prerogative, and gives such obedience to men, as is due only to God. This is expressly contrary to our Saviour's precept, "But call no man Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ," Matth. xxiii. 8, 9, 10, which does not oppose the use of these names in common speech; but forbids us to ascribe such an authority to any man on earth, as is due only to God and Christ: and if a vow of blind obedience does not make men our masters in this forbidden sense, I think nothing can. Thus voluntary and unnecessary severities to the body, which serve no ends of mortification or devotion; saying over a great number of Ave-maries, going in pilgrimage to Jerusalem, or Loretto, or to the shrine of any other powerful saints; to give all our estates for saying masses for the dead; to adore relics and images, to kiss the pavement of such a church, or some cross drawn on it; to say over some particular prayers, so many times a day, or to pray before such a particular altar, and such-like things, as by the liberality of Popes have so many thousand years indulgence for a reward, are indeed works of supererogation, because God has not commanded them; but I doubt are no Christian excellencies. Such things as these make men saints, and enrich the Church with merits, and much good may do them with it.

X. "Every soul, as soon as expired, is conveyed to heaven or hell."

In answer to this, I told him, that "the Scripture gives us no account of any other places of rewards and punishments in the other world, but heaven and hell." And that this proposition, "that every soul, as soon as expired, is conveyed to heaven or hell, is only an inference from this doctrine; that we know of no other place they should go to after death, the Scripture having not told us of any other." That our Church, though she rejects purgatory, yet has not determined against an intermediate state, between death and judgment. Though Christ's parables of Dives and Lazarus, and St. Paul's desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, look fairly towards proving that good men go to heaven, and bad men directly to hell, when they die.

He takes notice only of this last passage of Dives and Lazarus, and St. Paul; and says, that this would prove some-

thing, "if three souls be all, or all souls expire in either Dives's fitness for hell, or Lazarus's and St. Paul's for heaven." But he should have taken the whole proof together; that there is no mention made in Scripture of any other place of rewards or punishments in the next world, but heaven and hell; and that wherever we have any account of the state of men after death, we either hear of them in heaven or hell. As Dives, when he died, was immediately tormented in hell, and Lazarus was conveyed into Abraham's bosom; and St. Paul expected when he died, to go immediately to heaven, and to be with Christ: but we read of no man, who went to purgatory when he died: and what other proof can we have of this, but that heaven is promised to good men, and hell threatened against bad men? and we have some examples of both recorded in Scripture; unless we expect the Scripture should give us a complete catalogue of all who were saved or damned in those days.

As for men's fitness for heaven or for hell, when they die; I know not well what he means by it. For men may be fit, as he calls it, for hell, who are not as wicked as Dives; and we all have reason to hope, that those may be fit for heaven, who are not so holy as St. Paul was. Though there are different degrees of vice and virtue, which may qualify men for different degrees of rewards and punishments, yet as we read in Scripture but of two states in the other world, heaven and hell, so we read but of two distinctions of men in this world, the good and the bad, to whom these promises or threatenings belong. Now every man, when he dies, must be one of these; either a penitent or an impenitent sinner, for the Scripture knows no medium between them. If he be a penitent sinner, by the gracious terms of the Gospel, he has a right to pardon of sin and eternal life; and why is not that man fit for heaven, who has a covenant right to it? and what should detain him in purgatory, who has an immediate right to heaven? If he be an impenitent sinner, hell is his portion, and he must have it.

But, after all, this is no controversy between us and the Church of Rome, whether "every soul, as soon as expired, is conveyed to heaven or hell;" but whether those, who shall finally be saved, must suffer the pains of purgatory in the other world, before they shall be received into heaven. Our author has a mind to confound these two, and seems to think it proof enough, that there is a purgatory, if there be a middle state between death and judgment, which is neither heaven

nor hell ; and possibly those, who do not understand this controversy, may be deceived with such pretences, and therefore it will be convenient briefly to state this matter.

There have been, I confess, very different opinions among some of the Fathers, about the state of souls departed, both before and since the resurrection of Christ from the dead, as you shall hear more presently ; and there may be very different opinions about it still, and I believe will be among thoughtful and inquisitive men, and no great hurt done neither, while they are not made articles of faith, nor the foundation of some new and unscriptural worship.

But that our people may not be imposed on with sham proofs, which are nothing to the purpose (as it is plain this author intended to do in this article), it will be necessary plainly to represent the doctrine of the Church of Rome concerning purgatory, that they may know what proofs to demand of it.

Now the Council of Trent determines no more, than that “there is a purgatory, and that the souls, which are detained there, are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the most acceptable sacrifice of the altar :” and commands “the bishops diligently to take care, that the wholesome doctrine of purgatory,* delivered by the holy Fathers and Councils, be believed, held, taught, and preached to Christ’s faithful people.”

The Fathers of this Council were very careful not to determine what purgatory is, what the punishments of it are, where the place of it is, but refer us to former Fathers and Councils for it : and therefore among the rest, I suppose, they mean the Council of Florence ; where this purgatory is expressly affirmed to be by fire ; and to be a state of punishment. Cardinal Bellarmine, who wrote since the Council of Trent, understood Fathers and Councils, and the sense of the Roman Church, as well as any man, and therefore I shall briefly shew what he thought of this matter.

That Bellarmine did believe, that souls departed were purged with fire, is abundantly evident from what he dis-

* Purgatorium esse, animasque ibi detentas, fidelium suffragiis, potissimum vero acceptabili altaris sacrificio juvari ; præcipit Sancta Synodus Episcopis, ut sanam de purgatorio Doctrinam, à sanctis patribus et sacris conciliis traditam, Christi fidelibus credi, teneri, doceri, et ubique prædicari diligenter studeant. Concil. Trid. Sess. 25. Decret. de Purgat [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 894. Lut. Par. 1672.]

courses* on 1 Cor. iii. and from those testimonies of the Fathers, which he abuses to this purpose.

But for what end these punishments serve, is as considerable as purgatory-fire itself; and they, Bellarmine tells us, are to expiate venial sins, or such mortal sins whose guilt is pardoned, but not the temporal punishment due to them; for according to the doctrine of the Church of Rome,† there are some venial sins, which in their own nature do not deserve eternal, but only temporal punishments: and as for mortal sins, when the guilt of them is pardoned by the sacrament of penance, by confession, and the absolution of the priest, yet there remains a temporal punishment to be undergone by the penitent, either in this world, or in purgatory. So that if men die under any venial sins, or mortal sins whose guilt is remitted, which they have not made complete satisfaction for in this world, they must bear the temporal punishments of these sins in purgatory: and therefore, as very good men, who have neither any venial nor mortal sins to satisfy for, go directly to heaven when they die; and bad men, who are under the guilt of mortal sins, go directly to hell: so those who are indifferently good, *i. e.* who have only venial sins, or the temporal punishment of mortal sins to make satisfaction for; what is wanting of a complete satisfaction for these sins, while they lived, must be made up in purgatory.

For we must not think, that this fire of purgatory is for the purging or reforming sinners, that they may ascend more pure and refined into heaven; but only and merely to bear that temporal punishment which is due to sin.‡ For the Cardinal industriously proves, that the souls in purgatory can neither merit nor sin; that they are perfect in charity, and consequently in all other graces; and come no more perfect out of purgatory than they went in; but when they have paid the uttermost farthing, have undergone all that temporal punishment which is due to their sins, then they shall be released, and received into heaven.

But because this is a very uncomfortable doctrine, that men must lie many hundred or thousand years in purgatory, which differs from the torments of hell only in the continuance of them,§ (for purgatory is as hot as hell, but one is temporal,

* De Purgat. l. 1. cap. 5. [vol. 2. p. 331, &c. Prag. 1721.] cap. 10. [Ibid. p. 343, &c.] l. 2. cap. 10, 11, 12. [Ibid. p. 371.]

† Cap. 11. [Ibid. p. 347.] ‡ Idem. l. 2. cap. 3, 4. [Ibid. p. 361, &c.]

§ Ibid. c. 14. [Ibid. p. 372.]

and the other eternal), which is a very terrible consideration, that we must be tormented for many hundred years, though not for ever; therefore they tell us, that the souls in purgatory may be relieved by the prayers and alms of the living, and by the sacrifice of the mass;* and principally by indulgences, which the Pope dispenses and applies to particular persons, out of the treasury of the Church, which consists of the merits of supererogating saints.

This short account I have given of the doctrine of purgatory, not that I intend to spend time to confute it now, to shew how groundless it is; how injurious to the goodness of God, and to the merits of Christ; how contrary to the sense of the Primitive Church, and of most, if not all, Christian churches at this day, excepting the Church of Rome; but to let our people see what kind of proofs they must demand for purgatory, which alone will be sufficient to secure them from the attacks of their wittiest adversaries. As to shew this particularly:

First, to prove a middle state between death and judgment, which is neither heaven nor hell, does not prove a Popish purgatory. Whoever is acquainted with the writings of the Fathers of the first four ages, must confess, that this was a received opinion among them; that no man, excepting Christ himself, was received into heaven till the day of judgment. I shall not multiply quotations to this purpose, which the learned know where to find. Irenæus† and Tertullian prove this from the example of Christ, to which we must be conformed. For Christ himself did not ascend into heaven till after his resurrection; but as his body rested in the grave, so his soul went into the place of souls departed; and when he arose again, then he ascended into heaven. And thus we must do also. When we die, our souls shall live in those places, which God has prepared for separate souls, and there they must remain till the resurrection; and when we have re-assumed our bodies, we shall be admitted into the highest heavens, whither Christ is ascended. This they affirm in opposition to those Gnostic heretics, who taught, that as soon as they died, they should ascend above the heavens to him whom they called the Father, which,‡ Irenæus says, is to exceed the

* Cap. 16. [Ibid. p. 374.]

† Irenæus, l. 5. contr. Hæres. c. 31. [vol. 1. p. 330. Venet. 1734.] Tert. de Anima, cap. 55. [p. 304. Par. 1695.]

‡ Supergradiuntur ordinem promotionis justorum, et modos (al. motus) meditationis ad incorruptelam ignorant. Ir. ibid.

order of promoting just men, as being ignorant of the regular gradations and advances to incorruption. And this he attributes to the denial of the resurrection of the flesh ; for it is no wonder, that such men should not know the order of the resurrection, who deny the resurrection. From whence it is plain, that in Irenæus's opinion,* no man who believed the resurrection of the flesh, could reasonably think that the souls of good men did ascend into heaven, till the soul and body were united at the resurrection ; since Christ himself did not ascend into heaven, till after his resurrection : though he grants, that some did believe so, who were orthodox in the article of the resurrection, though herein they agreed with heretics.† That this was the opinion of Justin Martyr, Lactantius, Hilary, St. Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, and divers others, is at large proved by the learned Mr. Dailly,‡ and vindicated from the exceptions of Cardinal Bellarmine.

But how this differs from a Popish purgatory, will appear in these three particulars.

First, That they affirmed this of all separate souls, that none were received into heaven before the resurrection. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, whatever they were ; they continue in the state of separate souls, and have not their full reward, and are not received into the highest heavens, till the resurrection of their bodies. This is the *Lex Mortuorum*, as Irenæus calls it, the law of the dead ; the *ordo promotionis justorum*, the order in which just men shall be advanced. For as St. Chrysostom§ affirms, if the body do not rise, the soul remains uncrowned, out of that state of blessedness which is in heaven. Whereas the Popish purgatory is not for all souls, but only for those who have not made a perfect satisfaction for their sins in this life ; and therefore must endure the temporal punishments due to them in purgatory. Whereas the souls of all children, who die after baptism, before the commission of any actual sin, and the souls of good men, who have completed their satisfaction in this life, according to the doctrine of the

* Qui ergo universam reprobant resurrectionem, et quantum in ipsis est, auferunt eam de medio, quid mirum est, si nec ordinem resurrectionis sciunt.—Ibid.

† Quidam ex his, qui putantur rectè credidisse—hæreticos sensus in se habentes. Ibid.

‡ Dall. de Pœnis et Satisf. l. 5.

§ Εἰ οὐκ ἀνίσταται τὸ σῶμα, ἀστεφάνωτος ἡ ψυχὴ μένει ἔξω τῆς μακαριότητος τῆς ἐν οὐρανοῖς.

Church of Rome, ascend directly into heaven; which is expressly denied by these ancient Fathers; and was taught by few in those days, but by such heretics as denied the resurrection of the body.

Secondly, According to these ancient Fathers, this separate state, wherein the souls of good men continue till the resurrection, is not a state of punishment, as the Popish purgatory is, but of joy and felicity. They were divided indeed about the place, where the souls of good men lived till the resurrection; some placed it in secret receptacles within the earth, and therefore called it the *Infernum*, as Tertullian did; others thought it was above the earth in some celestial region, but below the highest heavens; but they all agreed, that it was not heaven, and that it was not a state of punishment, but of rest and happiness;* and therefore they called it Abraham's Bosom, and Paradise, which they distinguish from heaven. Tertullian calls it a place of divine pleasantness, appointed for the spirits of holy men. The author of the "Questions and Answers to the Orthodox," in Justin Martyr,† expressly tells us, that when the soul goes out of the body, there is a great difference made between the righteous and the wicked. For they are carried by angels to such places, as are proper for them. The souls of just men into paradise, where they have the conversation and sight of angels and archangels, and the vision (ὁπτασίαν) of our Saviour Christ; as it is written, "being absent from the body, we are present with the Lord."—From hence Bellarmine concludes, that by Paradise this author understands heaven, because there we shall have the vision of Christ, and therefore that paradise must signify that place where Christ is present: which is directly contrary to the doctrine of this author, who makes paradise only a receptacle of separate souls, till the resurrection. But though it be not heaven, there is, he says, a great communication between heaven and paradise; for they have the frequent visits and conversation of angels and archangels, whom they see and converse with, as they do with one another; but when he speaks of Christ, he expressly makes a distinction between their sight of and conversation with angels, and Christ; for this latter is only κατ' ὁπτασίαν, by way of vision, as we see things, which are absent, and at a distance;

* Locum divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatum. Tert. Apol. cap. 47. [ut supra, p. 37.]

† Justin Martyr, l. resp. ad Orth. quæst. 75. [p. 470. Par. 1742.]

but yet this does so strongly affect them, that he thinks, that of St. Paul may be applied to it, "being absent from the body, we are present with the Lord." And certainly this is no Popish purgatory, but as they thought, the very next degree of happiness to heaven itself.

Thus St. Hilary* expressly asserts, that the state of souls departed is a state of happiness; and St. Ambrose tells us, that while the fulness of time comes, the souls are in expectation of such a resurrection as they deserve: punishment expects some, and glory others;† and yet neither bad souls are in the mean time without punishment, nor the good without reaping some fruits of their virtue: but I need not multiply quotations to prove that which no modest man, who is acquainted with the doctrine of the Fathers, can deny.

Thirdly, Another difference is, that this is an unalterable state till the day of judgment, and therefore no Popish purgatory, out of which, as the Church of Rome pretends, souls may be redeemed by the prayers and alms and masses of the living, and ascend immediately into heaven. This is evident from what I have already said, that this state is to last till the resurrection, according to the sense of the ancient Fathers; as Tertullian expressly affirms,‡ that heaven is open to none, while this earth lasts; but the kingdom of heaven shall be opened with the end of the world: and St. Chrysostom observes, from the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that the souls of men, after their departure out of these bodies, are carried to a certain place, from whence they cannot go out when they will, but there expect the terrible day of judgment. Which plainly shews what his belief was, that they must continue in that state, which they enter upon at death, till the resurrection: and this, I think, is sufficient to shew the difference between a Popish purgatory, and that middle state between death and judgment, which the ancient Fathers taught.

* Hilar. in Psal. 2. [vol. 1. p. 59. col. 1. Veron. 1730.] et in Psal. 120. [Ibid. p. 422. col. 2.]

† Ergo dum expectatur plenitudo temporis, expectant animæ Resurrectionem debitam. Alias manet pœna, alias gloria. Et tamen nec illæ interim sine injuriâ, nec istæ sine fructu. Ambr. de Bono Mortis, cap. 10. [vol. 1. p. 408. Par. 1686.]

‡ Nulli patet cœlum, terra adhuc salva, ne dixerim clausa, cum transactione enim mundi reserabuntur regna cœlorum. Tert. Apol. cap. 47. [De Anima, cap. 55.] [ut supra, p. 304.] Chrys. Hom. 29. in Matth. [vol. 7. p. 366. Par. 1727.]

Secondly, Nor is it sufficient to prove a Popish purgatory that the ancient Fathers did believe, that all men must pass through the fire at the day of judgment. That those, who were perfectly good, should receive no hurt nor damage by it; that those who had any remains of corruption about them should be detained a longer or shorter time in that last fire, till they were purged from their sins; and that bad men should irrecoverably sink down into endless burnings. This was a received opinion among the ancient Fathers, that at the day of judgment all men should be tried by fire, which is so universally acknowledged, that I need not prove it by particular quotations. But yet there is an irreconcilable difference between this opinion and the Popish doctrine of purgatory; as will appear in these particulars.

1. That the Popish purgatory is now, and has been in being, at least, since the time of our Saviour; and that those, who deserve the fire of purgatory, fall into it, when they go out of these bodies; whereas the fire, which the Fathers speak of, is not till the day of judgment. This was the opinion of Lactantius, Hilary, Ambrose, and St. Augustine* himself: who expressly tells us, that this fire is at the end of the world, *in fine seculi*; and therefore not the Popish purgatory, which, as they would persuade us, is already kindled, and has been for many hundred years.

Indeed, St. Augustine, though he owns that fiery trial at the last judgment, as the Fathers before him did, yet he has something peculiar in this matter, which none of the Fathers before him ever taught; and therefore having no authority of tradition, it must rest wholly upon his own authority, who had no more authority to invent any new doctrine in his age, than we have in ours: there are three or four places in St. Augustine, which do speak of some purgatory fires, which some men must undergo between death and judgment, which looks most like the Popish purgatory of any thing in the ancient Fathers; and I believe was the first occasion of it; which may be the reason, why this doctrine has so much prevailed in the Latin Church; which was acquainted with St. Austin's writings; when it has been always rejected by the Greeks, as is evident from the Council of Florence. But there are two things to be said to this:

First, That St. Austin speaks very doubtfully about it.

* Aug. l. 16. de C. D. c. 24. [vol. 7. p. 438. Par. 1685.]

That there may be such punishments after this life (he says); is not incredible,* and we may examine, whether there be any such thing or not; and it may either be found, or may still continue a secret, whether some Christians, according to the degree of their love and affection for these perishing enjoyments, be not sooner or later saved by a certain purgatory fire; and in another place he says, he does not reprove this opinion; for it may be, it is true: *Non redarguo, quia forsitan verum est. De C. D. l. 21. c. 25.* And elsewhere he says, that though such speculations may serve for his own, or other men's instruction, yet he does not attribute any canonical authority to them, and therefore he was very far from making it an article of faith, as the Church of Rome has done.†

Secondly, And yet, though St. Austin speaks of a purgatory fire after death, and before the day of judgment, he seems, by his whole discourse, never to have thought of such a purgatory, as the Church of Rome has invented. The occasion of what he says to this purpose, is that noted place, 1 Cor. iii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15: "For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is: if any man's work abide, which he built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Some there were, who from this place concluded, that those who held the foundation, who believed in Christ, and continued, in the unity of the Church, how wicked soever their lives were, should at last be saved by fire: this St. Austin vehemently opposed, though it is very like the doctrine or practice of the Church of Rome, which sends all good Catholic sinners, how wicked soever their lives have been, to purgatory; especially if they have had time to confess and receive absolution. They

* Tale aliquid etiam post hanc vitam fieri incredibile non est, et utrum ita sit, quæri potest; et aut inveniri, aut latere, nonnullos fideles per ignem quendam Purgatorium, quanto magis minusve bona pereuntia dilexerunt, tanto tardius, citiusve, salvati. Aug. Enchirid. c. 69. [Ibid. vol. 6. p. 222.]

† Cum iis quæ descripsimus, ita nostra vel aliorum exerceatur, vel erudiatur, infirmitas, ut tamen in eis nulla velut canonica constituatur autoritas. Aug. de octo Quæst. Dulcitii Quæst. 3. [Ibid. p. 131.]

absolve all that confess, and no man, who is absolved at the hour of death, can go to hell ; but how wicked soever he is, he shall at last be saved by the fire of purgatory. In opposition to this, St. Austin* expounds " wood and hay and stubble," which some build upon the foundation, not of such sins as the Scripture tells us, will shut us out of the kingdom of heaven, such as St. Paul mentions, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, " Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, &c. shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," but of such a great passion for the present enjoyments of this world, though lawful and innocent in themselves, that we cannot lose them without great trouble and anxiety of mind : for when such men must suffer the loss of all these things for Christ ; if they hold the foundation, if they prefer Christ before all other things, they will suffer the loss of all things for him ; but then that fondness they have for this world, will make the loss of these things very afflicting ; *dolor urit*, such sorrow burns their souls, and is a kind of purgatory fire to them in this world, which those good men escape, who sit loose from all present things, and therefore are not so much affected with the loss of them ; but those who love this world too passionately, if notwithstanding they can bear the loss of all for Christ, shall be saved, but so as by fire ; shall smart for their loving this world too well, in those burning and purgatory flames, which an inordinate love and grief will kindle in their souls.

This is what St. Austin understands by being saved by fire in this world, that sorrow, with which those are burnt, when they lose these things, who loved them too much, while they had them ; but this purgatory is in this life, and St. Austin questions, whether there may not be something like this, *aliquid tale*, in the next world : that is, that after death, men who loved this world too well, may be greatly afflicted for the loss of it ; which is all the purgatory fire before the day of judgment, that St. Austin ever thought of ; and he was the first that ever thought of this ; and yet this is nothing at all to a Popish purgatory, as every body will grant. So that though St. Austin was doubtful, whether there may not be some purgatory punishments after death, for those who were too fond of this life ; that is, whether their leaving this world, and going into such a different state, where they can enjoy nothing, they were fond of here, will not greatly afflict and

* Aug. Enchi i lion ad Laurent. Cap. 67, 68, 69. [Ibid. p. 221, 222.]

burn and torment their minds, either a longer or shorter time, according to the degree of their love to this world : yet neither St. Austin, nor any of the Fathers thought that there was any material purgatory fire (such as the Popish purgatory is), till the end of the world.

Secondly, Another difference between that fire which the Fathers mention, and the Popish purgatory fire, respects the persons, who are to be tried in it. For the Fathers taught, that at the day of judgment all men, excepting Christ himself, must pass through the fire : not St. Peter, nor St. Paul, nay, not the blessed Virgin herself excepted. This is expressly asserted by Lactantius, Hilary, Ambrose,* and many others. "We must all be tried by fire, whoever desires to return into paradise, *ideo unus ignem illum sentire non potuit, qui est justitia Dei, Christus, quia peccatum non fecit*. Christ only, who is the righteousness of God, and never committed any sin, escapes that fire : " but they believed, that all mankind besides must pass through it, that perfect good men shall pass unhurt and untouched ; that those who are imperfectly good must be purged by fire, and shall suffer by the flames of it a longer or shorter time, as their purgation requires ; and that bad men shall sink for ever into those bottomless lakes of fire and brimstone.

But the Popish purgatory is neither for very good nor very bad men. Bad men immediately go to hell, and perfect saints ascend directly into heaven without passing the fire of purgatory ; which therefore cannot be that fire the Fathers speak of, which the most perfect saints must pass through into heaven.

Thirdly, Another difference is, that the Popish purgatory fire is not for purgation ; but the fire at the day of judgment, according to the ancient Fathers, is. I observed before, that the Popish purgatory is not to make men better, for the souls in purgatory are perfect in all graces, and can neither merit nor sin ; all that they have to do in purgatory, is to make satisfaction for that temporal punishment, which is due to their sins : their sins are already pardoned, and their souls are purged ; they perfectly love God, and are beloved by him ; and yet unless they be relieved by the prayers and alms and masses of the living, they may lie several ages in purgatory, bearing the punishment of their sins, when they are both

* Ambros. Serm. 20. in Psalm. 118. [ut supra, p. 1225.]

pardoned and cleansed from sin : which may seem a little odd to those men, who remember that Christ has borne the punishment of our sins ; and who know no other end of punishments, but either to reform the sinner, or to take vengeance on their sins, which there is no room for, when the sin is pardoned.

But now, though the ancient Fathers do deny, that there is any purgation of sin between death and judgment ; but that every soul continues in the same state, wherein death found it, till the day of judgment ; yet they make the fire at the day of judgment to be truly purgatory, to purge us from all the remains of corruption, just as gold is purged and refined in the fire : and therefore they tell us, that perfect souls shall pass through the fire unhurt ; but if there be any lead mingled with our gold, that must be burnt and dissolved before we can pass through this fire into heaven : now though this be very unintelligible also, how a material fire can purge and refine a soul, yet it shews, how much this differs from the Popish purgatory, which burns and torments indeed, but does not purge and refine, and therefore is very improperly called a purgatory fire.

Origen, indeed, whom Cardinal Bellarmine and others quote for this purgatory fire, as they do also Plato and Virgil, did believe a purgatory fire in a true and proper sense ; for he believed all punishments, whether in this world, or in the next, were only purgatory ; that is, not merely for punishment, but for the correction and amendment of those who suffered. And therefore he did also believe, that the worst of men, nay, the devils themselves, should at last be purged and cleansed by fire, and restored to a state of happiness. The sum of his opinion, in short, was this, that at the day of judgment, Christ will destroy this world with fire, as he is said, “to come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God.” And this fire, which shall burn the world at the last day, seems to be that purgatory fire, of which Origen and some other Fathers speak. Though I know some thought this fire to be in the upper regions, so as to intercept our ascent into heaven without passing through it. This will try all men ; for all must pass through this fire, as the ancients believed ; and those who had hay and stubble, or any combustible matter about them, who had any remains of corruption to be purged away, must stay in it a longer or shorter time, till they were thoroughly purged from their sins ; this, as you have heard,

was the general opinion of the Fathers, as well as of Origen, and therefore Origen's purgatory fire is not the Popish purgatory, because that is not kindled till the day of judgment. But then Origen thought, that this purgation extended to the worst of men, and to devils themselves; that though they might lie many ages in this fire, before they are perfectly purged; yet they should be purged at last, and restored to the favour and enjoyment of God. For which he was generally condemned by the ancient Christians, and principally by the fifth General Council. And yet there were other Fathers, who were in some degree tainted with this opinion. For there are plain marks of it in Gregory Nyssen, if his works were not corrupted by the Origenists, as some suspect; and in St. Jerome himself. For though some would not allow of the final salvation of devils, yet they believed this of all mankind, though never so wicked; others thought this must be confined to all Christians; others to all those Christians who were not guilty of heresy or schism, how wicked soever they were otherwise. These opinions are rejected and condemned by the Romanists, as well as by us, and therefore they ought not to allege such authorities as these, which are nothing to their purpose. For that there will be such a fire at the day of judgment, does not prove that there is one already kindled; and a purgatory fire, which cleanses and purges our sins, does not prove that there is such a purgatory fire, as is only to punish those whose sins are already pardoned and cleansed.

Fourthly, There is another considerable difference between this Popish purgatory and the fire at the day of judgment; that there is no redemption out of this by the prayers and alms and masses of the living; which is the most considerable thing in the Popish purgatory; and that for which I fear the Church of Rome does principally value it. For this sets a good price upon indulgences, gives great authority to their priests, enriches their monasteries, and is the great support of the Roman hierarchy. But as the Fathers say not one word about this, so the account I have already given of their opinions, is a demonstration that they could not think of any such thing; because this fire is not till the day of judgment, and then I suppose, when we all come to be judged, you will grant it is too late to offer prayers and alms and masses, for the redemption of ourselves or others from these purgatory flames. The Fathers thought, that we must all undergo this purgation by fire, which would be longer or shorter, as we had

more or fewer sins to be purged away, and therefore here can be no place for the suffrages and intercessions of the living. According to the Popish doctrine, those souls, who are redeemed out of purgatory, must be redeemed before the day of judgment, and those who are not redeemed before, are on course redeemed then, for the Roman purgatory must end at the day of judgment : though the purgatory fire the Fathers speak of does but begin then.

Thirdly, This gives occasion to another observation : that the ancient practice of praying for souls departed, does not prove that there is a Popish purgatory, or that those ancient Christians did believe that there was. That this was a very ancient practice, I readily grant, as all men must do who know any thing of these matters, and yet, from what I have discoursed, it is evident they never dreamt of such a purgatory, as the Church of Rome has now made an article of faith of, and therefore they could have no regard to the redemption of souls out of purgatory in their prayers for the dead, because they did not know of any such place.

But to what original then shall we attribute this custom of praying for the dead ? Truly, that is hard to say ; there is not the least footsteps of it in the canonical Scripture, neither of the Old nor New Testament, as Tertullian and others acknowledge ; and when it first came into the Church we cannot tell : that tender concern men have for the memory of their dead friends, which the heathens themselves shewed in their oblations and sacrifices, and funeral rites for the dead, seems to have given occasion to it ; and those who were converted from Paganism to Christianity, might still believe, that the dead challenged some part of our care and regard, which at first was tempered with a due respect to the laws of Christianity, but soon increased into greater excesses, as it is the nature of all superstitions to do. Prayers for the dead seem at first to be used only at their funerals, in time grew anniversary, and were celebrated by their own friends and relations, not with propitiatory sacrifices, but with some offerings for the relief of the poor ; and thus, by degrees, it crept into the service of the Church ; and at the celebration of the eucharist, the bishop or priest made mention of the names of martyrs and confessors, and bishops, and those who had deserved well of the Church, and particular Christians in their private devotions remembered their own relations and friends ; and thus it became a custom, without inquiring into the reasons of it ; till from this very

custom, people began to conclude, that such prayers and commemorations were profitable to the dead ; and that those, who had not lived so well as they should do, might obtain the pardon of their sins by the prayers and intercessions of the living : which I confess was a very natural thought, and shews us the easy progress of superstition ; that customs taken up without any good reason, will find some reason, though a very bad one, when they grow popular. Upon this Aerius condemns the practice, and is reckoned among heretics for it : though he only desired to know, for what reason the names of dead men are recited in the celebration of the eucharist, and prayers made for them ; whether by this means, those who died in sin might obtain the pardon of their sins ; which he thought, if it were true, would make it unnecessary for men to live virtuously, if they had good pious friends, who would pray for them when they are dead : Epiphanius undertakes to confute Aerius ; and we may easily perceive by him, that they were not so well agreed about the reason of it, as they were in the practice : had he understood the Popish doctrine of purgatory, how easy had it been to answer it ; that the reason of it was, that those who had died in a state of pardon, but had not made complete satisfaction for the temporal punishments due to their sins, were to undergo this punishment in purgatory ; and that they might be relieved, and delivered from purgatory by the prayers and alms of their living friends. This answer, no doubt, Epiphanius would have given, had he known it ; but he says not one word of this matter, which is a strong presumption, that he knew nothing of it ; and gives such other answers as are no answer to Aerius.

Aerius demanded, what benefit the dead received by the prayers of the living, whether they would obtain for them the pardon of their sins or not ; to this Epiphanius says not one word, but gives such reasons for it, as respect the living not the dead. As that it signifies our belief, that those who are dead to this world, do still live in another state, are alive to God : that it signifies our good hopes of the happy state of those who are gone hence, and to make a distinction between Christ and all other good men : for we pray for all but him, who intercedes for us all. Very worthy reasons of praying for the dead ! but, however, what is all this to a Popish purgatory ? The two first reasons do utterly overthrow it, which signify, what good hopes we have of the happy and blessed state of our deceased friends, not that they are tormented in purgatory, but that they

rest in the Lord : and so does the third, which declares that they prayed for all but Christ himself. For patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and the blessed Virgin herself ; for so the Church did, till praying for these saints and martyrs, was turned into prayers and supplications to them ; and yet I suppose, no man will say, that they prayed for these glorious saints, to pray them out of purgatory ; when the Church of Rome herself will grant that they were never in it.

There were some opinions in the ancient Church, which if they were not the first original of this custom of praying for the dead, yet were made use of by the Fathers to explain the meaning and use of it. Thus, as I have shewed you, the Fathers believed, that the souls of good men, after death, did not immediately ascend into heaven, but were detained till the resurrection of their bodies, in a place of rest and happiness, which they called Abraham's Bosom, or Paradise : now their happiness not being complete, they thought it very fit to recommend them unto God in their prayers, and beg God to remember them, which supposes that they were not in the immediate presence of God ; for it would be absurd to beg God to remember them, who constantly attend his throne and presence : and therefore they pray not for souls, who are tormented in purgatory, but *qui dormiunt in somno pacis*, who sleep in peace, *qui requieverunt in fide*,* who dying in the true faith, are gone to rest ; *qui dormierunt et quieverunt in fide*, who sleep and rest in the faith, as we find in the ancient Liturgies : and yet they pray, that " God would give them rest,† by the water of rest, in the bosom of Abraham, with Isaac and Jacob, that he would nourish them in a pleasant place by the waters of rest : " that is, that he would continue and increase this intermediate state of rest and happiness to them. For they did not think it improper to pray for what they knew the souls departed already enjoyed ; no more than we do in this state, to pray for such blessings as we already have.

Another opinion among them, was concerning the Millenium, or thousand years reign with Christ on earth, which was to be before their admission into heaven, in the new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven. Now during these thousand years, they thought that all just men should rise again, but some sooner, and others later, according to their different merits

* Cyrilli Hierosol. Liturgia. [p. 328. Venet. 1763.]

† Syr. Orationis. Bibl. Patrum. T. 6.

and deserts : as Tertullian* particularly explains it. And as the learned Mr. Dailly observes, several passages in their prayers do plainly refer to this : as when Tertullian† directs a widow to pray for her husband, *primæ resurrectionis consortium*, a part in the first resurrection. And St. Ambrose‡ prays for Gratian and Valentinian, *Te quæso, summe Deus, ut carissimos juvenes matura resurrectione suscites, et resuscites* : that God would raise those beloved young men with an early resurrection. The like may be seen in the Gothic Missal,§ and elsewhere ; and this I think has nothing to do with the Popish purgatory.

Another opinion they had regard to, in their prayers for the dead, was the fire of the day of judgment, which they believed all men must pass through, before they could enter into heaven, and continue a longer and shorter time in it, as they had more or fewer sins to purge away : and therefore this last and terrible judgment being yet to come, they prayed, that God would forgive their sins ; and be merciful to them, and deliver them in the day of judgment, of which there are some remains still in the Roman offices for the dead.

Thus, according to men's different opinions, they had different intentions in their prayers for the dead, which is a sign, as I observed before, that though they were agreed in the practice, the original reasons of this practice were not known, but men guessed at them, as they could, and altered their reasons, as they changed their opinions.

Hence it is, that St. Austin, and St. Chrysostom, though they never dreamt of a Popish purgatory, yet speak very differently of these matters, from those who went before them. For in their days, they began to call upon the saints, and to beg their help, and then St. Austin thought it very improper to pray for those, whose help they themselves expected : according to that known saying of his, That he is injurious to a martyr, who prays for him. Hence he makes three distinctions of souls departed, which the Church never heard of before. From whence I doubt not, but the Church of Rome learnt their distinctions, and accordingly allotted three different states for these three sorts of men, heaven, purgatory, and hell. For St. Austin taught, that some were so perfectly

* Tertull. contra Marcion. [lib. 3.] c. 24. [p. 412. Par. 1695.] Daill. de Pœnis et Satisf. l. 5. c. 9. † Tert. de Monog. c. 10. [Ibid. p. 531.]

‡ Ambr. de Obitu Val. [vol. 2. p. 1196. Par. 1690.] § Bibl. Patr. T. 6.

good, that there was no need of prayers or oblations for them; others imperfectly good; and for these, prayers were profitable; others very bad, who cannot be redeemed by the suffrages of the living. The first of these the Church of Rome places in heaven, the second in purgatory, the third in hell; and let us first see, whether St. Austin were of that mind; for if he were not, they cannot prove a purgatory from him, whatever becomes of his prayers for the dead.

Now it is evident, that St. Austin was of the same mind with those Fathers who went before him, concerning the state of souls departed; *viz.* that none were received into heaven till the resurrection; as he expressly affirms of all souls, that “during the time between death and the last resurrection, they are kept in hidden receptacles.”* He divides the Church into two parts, that which is still on earth, or that which after death rests in the secret receptacles and seats of souls,† which he calls Abraham’s bosom, and teaches, that all departed souls, either rejoice in Abraham’s bosom, or are tormented in eternal fire: and that by Abraham’s bosom, he does not mean heaven, is evident from what he elsewhere says; that though after this life we shall not go to that place, where the saints shall be, when it shall be said to them, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,” (which he represents as the common belief of all Christians, for he says, *quis nescit?* Who knows not this?) yet we may be there, where Dives saw Lazarus at rest, *viz.* in Abraham’s bosom, *in illâ requie certè securus, expectabis judicii diem*,‡ in that rest you will securely expect the day of judgment.

So that though St. Austin thought, that some souls were so good and perfect that there was no need to pray for them, yet he did not think that the most perfect souls ascended immediately into heaven, as the Church of Rome now teaches; but were happy and at rest in paradise, or Abraham’s bosom, till the resurrection.

Nor did he think, that those for whom he says our prayers are available, those who are imperfectly good, did after this life go into purgatory, there to bear the punishment of their sins. For what St. Austin thought of purgatory, you have already heard, which has nothing like a Popish purgatory in

* Enchirid. ad Laurent. [ut supra, vol. 6. p. 237.]

† De Civit. Dei, l. 12. c. 9. [Ibid. vol. 7. p. 308.]

‡ Idem, Tract. 10. in Ep. Joan. [Ibid. vol. 3. p. 900.]

it. He prayed for his mother Monica, that God would forgive her all her sins, and shew mercy to her; did he believe then, that his mother was in purgatory? By no means; for he expressly says, *et credo, jam feceris quod te rogo, sed voluntaria oris mei approba Domine*. "I believe, thou hast already done what I now pray for, but accept, O Lord, the free-will offerings of my mouth." He believed his mother was in a state of rest; but hoped, that God would accept his pious affection for his mother, and that she was not yet so perfect, but she might receive some benefit by it. To be sure the Church of Rome can never reconcile this prayer with their doctrine; for they teach, that sins are not pardoned in purgatory, but those who are pardoned before they die, suffer the temporal punishment of their sins in purgatory; whereas St. Austin does not pray, that his mother may be delivered from the pains of purgatory, but that God would forgive her sins.

The truth is, St. Austin was at a great loss between vindicating the ancient practice of the Church in praying for souls departed, and giving a reasonable and justifiable account of it: the Church did pray for souls departed, and therefore there must be some reason given of it: or else these prayers are vain and hypocritical, if they serve no good end. And yet in his days they began to think, and he himself was of that mind, that there were a great many saints and martyrs, who did not want their prayers; who were fitter to be intercessors themselves for those on earth, than to receive any benefit from their intercessions: and yet the Church prayed for all; for the most perfect saints, for the apostles, and martyrs, and the blessed Virgin herself. This he knew not how to reconcile, but by saying, that when the Church prayed for saints and martyrs, prophets and apostles, the meaning of her prayers was not to intercede with God for them, but to praise God for their graces and virtues; but when she prayed for meaner Christians, her prayers were intercessions for pardon and rest to their souls; and yet they were all prayed for in the same form of words, and the ancient Church made no such distinction between them: and thus he reconciles the matter by expounding the same words to two different and contrary senses, as they are applied to different subjects, which has taught the Church of Rome, when occasion serves, to soften her prayers, by expounding them contrary to the plain and natural signification of the words: that the most direct and formal prayers to saints and the Virgin for all temporal and spiritual blessings, when they

please, shall signify no more than a bare *Ora pro nobis*, pray for us.

About this time, St. Chrysostom also, in the Greek Church, defended this practice of praying for the dead; and yet the doctrine of purgatory never was received in the Greek Church, as appears from the Council of Florence; which is a plain sign, that though the Roman doctors think they have proved purgatory, if they can but prove that the ancient Church used to pray for the dead (which nobody denies), yet the Greek Church did not, and does not to this day, think this a good consequence; for they pray for the dead, but deny a Popish purgatory. Which shews, that though they prayed for the dead, they did it for other reasons than the Church of Rome now does.

And yet St. Chrysostom does not agree with St. Austin in that distinction he makes of souls departed, which shews that there was no certain tradition about this matter, but men of wit and learning framed different hypothesis and schemes of things to themselves, as they thought they could best give an account of this practice: for this was the thing both St. Austin and St. Chrysostom were intent on, to justify the practice of the Church, so that their prayers for the dead might not be thought vain and hypocritical.

But whereas St. Austin distinguishes souls departed into three orders; those, who are so perfectly good, that they need not our prayers; others, less perfect, to whom our prayers are beneficial; and a third sort so wicked, that their estate is irrecoverable, and so past the relief of our prayers: St. Chrysostom mentions but two sorts,* sincere good Christians; and infidels, and such as die without baptism, and bad Christians, whom he places in the same rank. As for the first, he expressly tells us, that after death they are in a state of rest and happiness, and upon this very account, condemns those extravagant expressions of sorrow at their funerals, and therefore he never thought of a Popish Purgatory; for I think we have great reason to lament those who are in purgatory, a place of torment, though not hell. As for others, he thinks† they deserve our sorrow and compassion, and prayers and alms, not that this can deliver them out of the state of the damned,

* Chrys. Serm. 3. in Philip. ed. Savil. tom. 4. p. 20. [vol. 11. p. 216, 217. Par. 1734.] et in Hebr. Ser. 4. p. 453. [Ibid. vol. 12. p. 47.]

† Chrys. Homil. 21. in Act. t. 4. p. 734.

but that he thought it gave some little ease and relief to their torments. And this was not only the sense of St. Chrysostom, that the damned themselves were eased by the prayers of the living, but St. Austin seems to be of the same mind,* when he says, that the suffrages of the living are profitable, either *ut plena fiat remissio, aut tolerabilior sit ipsa damnatio*; to obtain perfect forgiveness, or to make damnation itself more tolerable. And I think what Basil of Seleucia relates concerning Thecla, that by her prayers she obtained the soul of Falconilla, who died a Pagan, signifies, that he believed something more than this; that the prayers of the living may not only ease the torments of the damned, but deliver them out of hell itself.

Now this the Church of Rome believes no more than we do. They reject all the reasons for which the ancients prayed for the dead, and have invented some new reasons, which the ancient Fathers never thought of, *viz.* to pray men out of purgatory; and therefore, though they still pray for the dead, and we do not; yet they no more pray for the dead, in the sense of the ancient Church, than we do: however, I think, from hence it appears, that they cannot prove a Popish purgatory from the practice of the ancient Church in praying for the dead; which is all I intended to prove at this time.

XI. “Desiring the intercessions of the blessed, is more superstitious, and derogatory to our Lord’s mediatorship, than entreating the prayers of holy men militant.”

This I answered,† “was as plain in Scripture, as that Christ is our only Mediator in heaven, who alone (like the high-priest under the law, who was his type) is admitted into the holy of holies, to make expiation, and to intercede for us.—The sum of what we teach about this matter is this: that we must worship none but God, and therefore must not pray to saints and angels, as our Saviour teaches; ‘Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.’ That ‘there is but one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;’ and therefore we must not make more mediators to ourselves, nor put our trust in the intercession of saints and angels. Thus far we have plain Scripture proof; and then we think common sense teaches us the rest: that it is an injury to an only mediator to set up other mediators with him. That good men on earth are not mediators but supplicants, which

* Aug. Enchirid. ad Laurent. [ut supra, vol. 6. p. 238.]

† Answer to Request, p. 10, 11.

is no encroachment on Christ's mediatorship ; and that saints in heaven, according to the Church of Rome, pray as mediators and intercessors, who appear in the presence of God for us ; and this is not reconcilable with Christ's only mediatorship in heaven."

To this our author answers, page 7 : "It is not at all in Scripture, that our Saviour is our only Mediator of intercession ; therefore this proposition is not plain there. If such an only mediatorship of intercession be plain in Scripture, it had been easy and kind to have named such a plain Scripture. Yet none is brought, unless the Answerer meant, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God,' &c. for such a one. Truly I see not how he can deduce from it anything to his purpose, till it appear, that all prayer is divine worship, or that we pray to saints just as we do to God." This is all his answer, and I think, I might trust every ordinary reader with it, without any reply ; but I must be civil to our author, and therefore will try if I can make him understand this matter.

The reader will easily see, that that text, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God," and what he has concealed in an &c. as if he were afraid to let his own people, who possibly may read his book, know what follows, "and him only shalt thou serve," was never intended to prove, that Christ is our only Mediator of intercession. The proof I insist on, is in 1 Timothy ii. 5 : "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." But says our author, this does not prove that there is but one mediator of intercession. But why does it not prove this ? Is a mediator of intercession a mediator ? If he be, and there be but one mediator, then there is but one mediator of intercession ; for there is but one mediator in all. As for his distinction between a mediator of redemption and intercession, there is no such distinction to be found in Scripture ; and therefore when St. Paul asserts without any distinction, that there is but one Mediator, I think we have reason to do so too ; for if we admit of unscriptural distinctions, I know no article of our faith but what may be distinguished away.

When the Apostle says, there is but one God, why may not a heathen distinguish upon this ; that it is very true, there is but one supreme and sovereign God, though there are many inferior deities ; as well as a Papist say, that there is but one Mediator indeed of redemption, but there may be many mediators of intercession ? For both here, and in 1 Cor. viii. 5,

the Apostle makes Christ the one Mediator, just as God is the one God, and that sure signifies the only God, and the only Mediator. "For though there be, that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Where, as one God is opposed to the multitude of heathen gods, so one Lord, or one Mediator (as Baalim and lords signified those mediating powers between the gods and men), is opposed to the many lords and mediators among the heathens.

Indeed as there is no foundation in Scripture for this distinction between a mediator of redemption and intercession, so there is no sense in it; for the office of a mediator, considered as a mediator, consists wholly in intercession; whence his authority and interest to intercede arises, is of another consideration: and therefore St. John distinguishes between Christ's being an advocate for us, and a propitiation for our sins, 1 John ii. 1, 2: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." Christ is our only Redeemer, who has bought us with his own blood; but to be our Redeemer and to be our Mediator and Advocate, are two things: by the constitution and appointment of God, both these are united in one person; that he who is our only Redeemer, is our only Advocate also; but yet to redeem with his blood, and to intercede with his Father for us, differ, as the death of the sacrifice doth from the intercession of the priest. To redeem and make atonement for our sins, by shedding his blood upon the cross, is not his intercession for us; and to intercede for us in heaven, is not to redeem us by shedding his blood, though he intercedes in virtue of his blood. So that though Christ be our Redeemer, yet considered as our Mediator and Advocate, his mediation consists wholly in his intercession for us: and therefore to say, that there is one mediator and one intercessor, is the very same thing. Suppose then the Apostle had said, there is one God, and one intercessor between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; would this have proved, that there are no mediators of intercession, but only Christ? or would they still say, that there is an intercessor of redemption, and intercessors of intercession, and yet that there is but one intercessor?

But besides this, this very distinction between a mediator of

redemption, and a mediator of pure intercession, that is, such a mediator as mediates in virtue of his blood and sacrifice, and a mediator, who intercedes only by prayers, and personal interest and merits, is contrary to the analogy both of the Old and New Testament. For as there is no remission or expiation, so there is no mediation without blood. For to mediate and intercede, is not merely to pray for another, but it signifies a ministerial authority to apply the virtues and merits of a sacrifice.

Thus it was under the law of Moses : the high-priest was the mediator, or as the Apostle speaks, "every high-priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1. Thus he mediates by offering gifts and sacrifices, by making atonement and expiation of sin. And no man has authority to do this, but by God's appointment. "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron," ver. 4. Since there is no remission of sins without shedding of blood, without the atonement and expiation of sacrifice ; there can be no mediation but in virtue of the sacrifice ; and therefore there can be no mediator, but he who offers the sacrifice, which confines mediation to the sacerdotal office. And therefore, if we have but one high-priest, there can be but one mediator also between God and man.

But that we may rightly apprehend this matter, and be able to distinguish between the prayers of good men for themselves and for each other, and the intercessions of a mediator ; we must distinctly consider the virtue of the sacrifice, the prayers of the people, and the intercession of the priest, all which must concur to an effectual prayer, to obtain our requests, and desires of God. Thus it was in the Mosaical law. The sacrifice was slain instead of the sinner, and to bear the punishment of sin ; and without shedding of blood, there was no remission. Prayers could not expiate sin without a sacrifice ; and therefore, even in the time of the patriarchs, an altar, which is for sacrifice, was the place of their devotions. Thus Noah,* as soon as he came out of the ark, built an altar, and offered sacrifice to God. Thus we frequently read, how Abraham, in his travels, wherever he made any stay, built an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord ;† that is, he

* Gen. viii. 20.

† Gen. xii. 7, 8. xxvi. 25.

offered sacrifices and prayers to God. The like we read of Isaac and Jacob : so that an altar was the place of their solemn devotions ; that is, they offered up their prayers to God in virtue of a sacrifice. For sinners must not go directly to God, without the atonement and expiation of a sacrifice.

Hence, under the law, while the priest offered the sacrifice, the people offered up their prayers to God to ascend together with the sacrifice ; and therefore those, who lived in places remote from Jerusalem, which was the only place of sacrifices ; or those who could not attend the daily sacrifices in the temple, yet were to observe the time of offering their sacrifices, for the time of their prayers : whence it is that the time of offering the sacrifice is called also, “ the hour of prayer.”*

Thus the people were to offer a sacrifice for sin, and to offer up their prayers in virtue of the sacrifice ; but then neither their prayers nor their sacrifice were acceptable to God, unless they were offered by the priest : who sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice upon the altar to make atonement ; and offered incense as an emblem of their prayers : to which the Psalmist alludes. “ Let my prayer be set before thee as incense ; and the lifting up of my hands, as the evening sacrifice.”† And therefore the Evangelist observes, that “ the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense :”‡ that their prayers might ascend as incense.

Thus we expressly read in the Book of the Revelation, of an angel, who stood at the altar, having a golden censer, “ and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne ; and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”§

Which expressly applies these legal types to the state of the Gospel, to that great sacrifice and great high-priest, who presents our prayers to God. The death of Christ upon the cross was the sacrifice for all our sins ; in virtue of this sacrifice we pray to God ; but Christ our great High Priest, is now ascended into heaven, to present himself before his Father, to offer his own blood, and in virtue of that, to offer our prayers to him. This is the work of a mediator and high-priest, not so much to pray for us, as to offer up our prayers

* Acts iii. 1.

† Psal. cxli. 2.

‡ Luke i. 10.

§ Rev. viii. 3, 4.

to God, in the virtue and efficacy of his own sacrifice, and with the authority of a heavenly mediator and high-priest.

Now this plainly shews the difference between the prayers of good men for themselves and one another, and the intercession of a mediator. Good men are humble supplicants, but they offered up their prayers to God, not in their own name, but by the hands of the great High Priest, and in the merits of his sacrifice; which is subordinate to the mediation of Christ, and as consistent with it, as the prayers of the people under the law were with the atonement and expiation made by the priest, who offered the blood of the sacrifice, and the incense to God. The work of a mediator, is to present our prayers and petitions, and to give value and efficacy to them, and therefore we must pray ourselves; we must put up our petitions to God, or our Advocate and Mediator cannot present them; but is it injurious to the office of an advocate, that we draw up a petition, which he is to present to our king? So that the prayers of good men for each other, is no encroachment upon the office of a mediator; for our prayers for others, as well as for ourselves, must be offered to God by the hands of our Mediator.

And this shews also, that to desire the prayers of good men on earth, is no derogation from the intercession of Christ: for we only desire them to join with us in our petition; just as if we should procure some persons of worth and note to subscribe our petition to our prince, which is no injury to our advocate, who presents it. For they are two different things, to subscribe a petition, and to present it to our prince.

And besides this, a prayer, though it be the prayer of the best man in the world, is but a prayer still, and may be answered or rejected, as God sees fit; but whatever prayer is presented by our Mediator, is always granted; for he mediates with authority and power: "He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."* Under the law, the atonement and expiation of the priest, was always valid to all the intents and purposes of the law, that is, to an external and legal purity: much more is the mediation of Christ effectual; for if it ever miscarried, he could not be the object of our faith and hope. A supplicant may heartily desire our good; but our Mediator, by virtue of his

* Heb. vii. 25.

office, obtains all the petitions and prayers he presents, and every body sees that these two are very consistent.

But though to desire the prayers of good men for us on earth, do not derogate from the intercession of Christ; yet to fly to the aid of saints in heaven does. For that makes them our advocates and intercessors, not our fellow supplicants; whereas there is but one Mediator in heaven, who appears in the presence of God for us; as under the law only the high-priest could enter into the holy of holies, which was a type of heaven, and did prefigure that great High Priest,* who was to ascend into heaven with his own blood.

I am sure the Church of Rome does not look upon the saints in heaven to be our fellow supplicants, as good men on earth are, but to be our advocates and intercessors; and then they are intercessors in heaven, where none but the high-priest was to intercede, and they are intercessors without a sacrifice, which is contrary to the analogy both of the Old and New Testament. For we have no more intercessors than priests; and we have but one High Priest, who is ascended into heaven, and appears in the presence of God for us. And if intercession be annexed to the priesthood, I desire to know how the Virgin Mary comes to be so powerful a mediatrix and advocatress; for we never heard of any she high-priest before.

This is answer enough to what he intimates, that desiring the intercessions of the blessed, is not more superstitious and derogatory to our Lord's mediatorship, than entreating the prayers of holy men militant; for to pray for one another in this world, is as consistent with the mediation of Christ, as to pray for ourselves; but the intercession of saints for us in heaven, is inconsistent with the only mediatorship of Christ.

But praying to saints in heaven, which he modestly calls "desiring the intercessions of the blessed," is of a different consideration, and more injurious to God than to a Mediator, considered only as our Mediator. For prayer is an act of worship peculiar and appropriate to God, and therefore not due to our Mediator himself, if he were not God. We must pray to God in the name of our Mediator, and present our petitions to God by him; but if our Mediator were not God, we must not pray to him; and thus they are injurious to our only Mediator, when they pray to God in any other name, and expect to be heard for the sake and merits of any other

* See Answer to Papists protesting against Protestant Popery.

mediator, but only Christ, as they always do on the festivals of their saints ; but to pray to saints also, is an additional crime ; it is giving the peculiar worship of God to creatures ; which I told him was expressly forbid by our Saviour, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." "But (says our author) I see not* how he can deduce from it (this last text) any thing to this purpose, till it appear that all prayer is Divine worship, or that we pray to saints just as we do to God." But now, methinks, till he make the contrary appear, it is very much to the purpose. For prayer is appropriated to God in Scripture, and all mankind have thought prayer an act of religious worship, and have been able to distinguish between a religious prayer, and begging an alms, or making any request to our earthly prince, or parents, or friends ; and if our author does not understand this, I have directed him in the margin, where he may be better informed.

XII. "Honouring the cross, the relics and representations of our Lord and his saints, with that degree of reverence, as we do the Gospels (commonly kissed and sworn by), altar, and other sacred utensils, is idolatry."

This I told him was ill represented ; for those who charge them with idolatry in worshipping the cross, and relics, and images, charge them also with giving more religious honours and worship to them than that external respect, which we allow to the Gospels and religious utensils, as both the decrees of their Councils, and the visible practice of their Church proves.

To this our author replies : "Our General Councils tell Protestants† we pay no other honour to any creature,"—than what ? Than such an external respect as is due to the Bible ? I never heard before, that they made the Bible the object of their worship, but I am sure some, which they call General Councils, have defined the worship of images and relics, witness the second Council of Nice, and the Council of Trent. It is strange to me, that at this time of day, he can think to impose upon Protestants with such shams. Surely he has never read "the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome truly represented," the answer to Monsieur de Meaux, or "to Papists protesting against Protestant Popery," nor the "Vindica-

* See the Object of Religious Worship, part 1. and the Answer to Papists protesting against Protestant Popery, sect. 4.

† Protestancy destitute of Scripture Proofs, p. 8.

tion of the Catechism truly representing the Doctrines and Practices of the Church of Rome, in answer to the first and second sheets, of the second part, of the Papist misrepresented and represented." Is our author then one of those, who are employed sometimes to do a little job at writing, but are not permitted to read any of our books, but what and when their superiors please? This gives an account of that mystery, how they can so confidently urge such things, as all the world now laughs at; for, poor men, they know no better; and what some so uncharitably call impudence, is only ignorance.

He proceeds: "Their test and homily call the honour we pay to sacred persons and things, idolatry. We must either then challenge Protestants, to prove this proposition, or conclude them calumniators. We know what we profess and practise, to be as the Catholic Church teaches; we hear our doctrine and practice confidently said, and solemnly subscribed to be idolatry. Sure then we may conclude, that Protestants believe the proposition, and decent it is that they give a reason of a faith so injurious to the Catholic Church, or henceforward renounce it."

This still makes good my conjecture, that he has only heard in general of such a charge as this, but never read the arguments, whereby some Protestants make good this charge, at least as they apprehend: for methinks, had he known these proofs, he should first have answered them before he had called for more; but I assure him, it will be an easier task to conclude them calumniators, than to undertake to answer them; and therefore if he be wise, let him stick to that; if they believe and practise, as the Church of Rome teaches (which in defiance of common sense, he will call the Catholic Church), I am sure they give another kind of honour to the cross, and relics, and images, than to the Bible; but if he thinks, that the Catholic Church always taught what the Church of Rome now teaches, I would desire him to read a late discourse, entitled "The Antiquity of the Protestant Religion concerning Images," which will better inform him.

But since he calls so importunately for proofs, it may be thought very uncivil to deny him; and therefore I shall briefly represent to him the reasons, why some Protestants have charged the Church of Rome with idolatry in worshipping the cross and images, and shall be very glad, for the sake of the Church of Rome, to see them well answered.

They lay their charge in the second commandment, which

forbids the worship of images, and all representative objects, and say that the words are so large as to comprehend all manner of images, which are set up for worship, that the law expressly forbids, without any distinction of the end and intention of doing it, all external acts of adoration, as bowing down to them, or before them : that it does not merely forbid the worship of images as gods ; for the heathen themselves were never so senseless, as to believe that their images of wood or stone, or silver or gold, were gods, but only visible representations of their invisible deities. That it does not only forbid the worship of the images of the heathen gods, but of the Lord Jehovah ; for the reason whereby Moses enforces this commandment is, that they saw “no similitude on the day, that the Lord spake to them in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,” Deut. iv. 15 ; and therefore they must take good heed unto themselves, lest they corrupt themselves with images : that they saw no image of God, is a good argument against their making and worshipping the image of the true God, but it is no direct argument against the images of heathen gods ; and therefore this must be a prohibition of worshipping the true God by images.

Another Scripture argument against image worship, is from the infinite perfections and excellency of the Divine nature, that no image can be made of God, but what must be a reproach and debasement of his majesty. “To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare to him,” &c. Isaiah xl. 18, &c. and this surely is an argument against making and worshipping any image of the true God.

They consider farther, that Aaron’s calf was not an image of a false god, but a symbolical representation of the Lord Jehovah ; for they expressly call it, the God which brought them out of the Land of Egypt ; and when Aaron himself appointed a feast for the worship of this molten god, he said, “To-morrow is a feast to the Lord,” or to Jehovah, Exod. xxxii. 4, 5 ; and therefore these Israelites are charged with changing their glory (*i. e.* the Lord Jehovah, who was the glory of Israel) “into the similitude of an ox, which eateth grass,” Psalm cvi. 20. But how can this be true, if they did not intend this calf as a representation of the Lord Jehovah ? And it is evident, that they made this calf only as a Divine presence to go before them in the absence of Moses ; for while Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, “the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him,

Up, make us gods, which shall go before us : for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him," verse 1. So that they did not think of changing their God, but only wanted a visible and symbolical presence of God with them, instead of Moses ; who, when he was with them, was a kind of Divine presence ; God conversing familiarly with him, and by him giving them directions and orders what to do : and yet the worship of this calf, which was not worshipped as a god, or the image of a false god, but as a symbolical representation of the Lord Jehovah, was idolatry.

The like may be said of the calves at Dan and Bethel, which Jeroboam set up in imitation of the golden calf, and for symbolical representations of the God of Israel. For so he himself tells them, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt ;" that is, the Lord Jehovah, whom Jeroboam did still own and worship. For he had no intention to change their God, but only to prevent their going up to Jerusalem three times in the year to worship there,* according to the law ; which he feared might prove the destruction of his new kingdom. And therefore God himself makes a great difference between the sin of Jeroboam and the sin of Ahab,† who introduced the worship of Baal, a false god. And therefore, though Jehu still preserved the golden calves, which Jeroboam set up, yet he calls his zeal in destroying Baal, his zeal for the Lord Jehovah.‡ Which is another Scripture example of idolatry in worshipping the image, or representation of the true God.

Another instance is the brazen serpent, which Moses set up in the wilderness, which was neither a god nor the image of a god, neither of the Lord Jehovah, nor of any heathen god ; and was not at first set up to be worshipped, but only to be looked on by those who were stung with fiery serpents ; and was preserved as a kind of holy relic, as a lasting memorial of that deliverance God wrought for them by it. But when the children of Israel burnt incense to it, though they could intend to worship no other God in it, but the Lord Jehovah, who gave it that miraculous power, and could worship it only as a memorative sign of God's mighty power, yet Hezekiah destroyed it, with the other instruments of idolatry, 2 Kings xviii. 4. And yet I think I could make a much better apology for the

* 1 Kings xii. 28.

† 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32.

‡ 2 Kings x. 16.

worship of the brazen serpent, than of the cross. For that was a type of Christ crucified, a type of God's own appointment, a miraculous and wonder working type, which I should think should as much deserve to be worshipped, as the picture or image of the tree whereon our Saviour died. For if a memorative sign of Christ deserve such divine honours, let them give me a reason, if they can, why the type of a crucified Saviour ought not as much to be worshipped by the Jews in those days, as the figure of Christ's cross now.

Thus the Protestants argue against the worship of images from the second commandment, and from the reasons and authorities of the Old Testament; and as for the New Testament, they can find no alteration made in this law there: we are commanded indeed to keep ourselves from idols, but the Gospel has given us no new notion of idolatry, and therefore they reasonably conclude, that what was idolatry under the Old Testament, is so under the New. And indeed they look upon the second commandment as a natural or moral law, and such laws Christ neither did, nor could alter, no more than he could alter the eternal reasons of things. For the prohibition of image worship is founded in the invisibility, purity, spirituality, and immense glory and perfections of the Divine nature, which cannot be represented by matter; and these reasons are as unchangeable as God is, and the law must be as unchangeable as the reasons of it. And therefore we find these very reasons urged by St. Paul in the times of the Gospel; "forasmuch as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art, or man's device," Acts xvii. 29. Not as if the heathens fancied that their gods were like the images they worshipped; for this is not only denied by their philosophers,* but the very nature of the thing shews it; for they worshipped such kinds of images, as it was impossible for them to conceive should be the likeness of any god; not only the images of men, but unpolished stones, and trees, birds, and beasts, and creeping things; which they did not take to be gods, nor the proper likenesses of their gods, but symbolical representations of them; but the Apostle's argument is this, that it is a ridiculous thing to make any image of God, when we cannot make any thing like him; as foolish a thing as it would be to paint a sound; and that it is an affront to so glorious a being,

* Maximus Tyrius, Dissert. 38.

to represent him by that which is so very unlike him, and so infinitely unworthy of his majesty and greatness. And though this argument from the invisibility and spirituality of the Divine nature does not conclude against making the images of Christ and his Apostles, who had the shape and figure of men, which might be painted or carved, no more than it did against many images of heathen gods ; most of whom are no better than dead men and women, yet it holds against the worship of any image ; for God alone, who is a pure and infinite spirit, is the sole object of our religious worship : and to worship God by an image, is to reproach his name, and to debase him as low as matter : and to worship that which can be painted, is to worship a false object ; for Christ as God, and so only he is the object of our worship, cannot be painted ; and to worship any material image, though it be not made for the supreme God, is yet a reproach to the Divine nature, as it signifies that something which is divine, and a fit object of our adorations, may be represented by material images and pictures.

But the Protestants consider farther, that if the worship of images was forbid by the law of Moses, it must needs be much more contrary to the Gospel of our Saviour, which has less to do with matter and sense, than the law had. Our Saviour tells us, "That God is a spirit, and those who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth," in opposition to the external, and typical, and figurative worship of the law ; and if this typical worship, which was allowed when the worship of images was forbid, be now abrogated as less pure and spiritual, they think it very strange, that the worship of images, which is the most gross and material, and unmanly worship that can be invented, shall be allowed under the spiritual state of the Gospel.

And there is one argument to this purpose, which I would desire our author seriously to consider, *viz.* That there is no material temple in the Christian Church, much less statues and images ; for the understanding of which, we must consider what notions the heathens had of their temples, what notion the Jews had of theirs, and that there is no such temple in the Christian Church.

As for the heathens, their temples were the houses of their gods, where they dwelt, and were confined, and shut up by some magical spells and charms, as the images of their gods were fastened there, that they might be always present to at-

tend the sacrifices and worship of their votaries : for they did not believe that their gods were omnipresent, and therefore they confined their presence to temples and images, that they might know where to find them. Their temples were the places where they kept the statues and images of their gods, to whom such temples were dedicated, and where they believed such gods dwelt ; according to that of Menander :

—— τὸν δίκαιον δεῖ θεὸν
οἴκοι μένειν σώζοντα τοὺς ἰδρυμένους.

That a just and righteous god must tarry at home to defend those who placed him there. This Origen gives an account of in his third and seventh books against Celsus, and the thing is so known, that I need not prove it ; a temple and an image in the heathen theology were inseparably united ; an image to represent their god, a temple as a house for him to dwell in, and where they might be sure to find him.

Under the Jewish law, God so far condescended to the weakness of that people, as to have a visible presence among them, first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple at Jerusalem ; but though he had his temple, yet he had no image, which the heathen world thought essential to a temple. For though a symbolical presence was no confinement of God, nor injurious to his majesty, yet a material image was : and yet Solomon, in his prayer of dedication, took care to prevent the heathen notion of a temple, as if God were confined to it ; for he owns his omnipresence, that he fills both heaven and earth ; only he prays, that he would have a more particular regard to that place, and to those prayers which should be offered up there ; 1 Kings viii. 27, 28, &c. “ But will God indeed dwell on the earth ? Behold the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded ? Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry, and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee this day : that thine eyes may be open to this house night and day,” &c.

And therefore we may observe, that the temple was so contrived, as to be a figure of the whole world. For the holy of holies was a figure of heaven, into which the high-priest entered once a year, Heb. ix. 24, and therefore the rest of the temple signified this earth, and the daily worship, and service of it ; which plainly signified to them, that that God who

dwelt in the temple, was not confined to that material building, but filled heaven and earth with his presence, though he was pleased to have a more peculiar regard to that place, and to the prayers and sacrifices which were offered there. And yet it seems that God would not so far have indulged them at that time, as to confine his worship and peculiar presence to a certain place, had it not been for the sake of some more divine mystery. For God's symbolical and figurative presence in the tabernacle and temple was only a type of the incarnation of the Son of God, of his dwelling among us in a human body, or material temple, as St. John plainly intimates, John i. 14: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth;" ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, he tabernacled among us; dwelt among us, as God under the law did in the tabernacle or temple; and Christ expressly calls his body the temple, John ii. 19: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," which the Evangelist tells us, "he spake of the temple of his body," ver. 21; and he affirms himself to be greater than the temple, Matth. xii. 6, he being that in truth, of which the temple was a figure; God dwelling among us, God dwelling in human nature. For this reason, the worship of God was confined to the temple at Jerusalem, to signify to us, that we can offer up no acceptable worship to God, but in the name and mediation of Christ.

But now, under the Gospel, all these types and figures being accomplished in the person of our Saviour, as their priesthood and sacrifices, so their temple also had an end; as Christ expressly tells the woman of Samaria, who disputed with him about the place of worship, whether it were the temple of Jerusalem or Samaria: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," John iv. 21; which cannot signify that they should worship God neither at Jerusalem nor Samaria, for there were famous churches planted at both these places, where they worshipped God in spirit and in truth; but it signifies that there should be no material temple, that the presence of God should not be confined to a certain place, as then it was to the temple; which occasioned that dispute between the Jews and Samaritans, in which temple God was peculiarly present; but wheresoever they worshipped God in spirit and in truth, the place should make no difference in their acceptance, as it did under the law; which is not opposed to the

erecting of decent and separate places of worship under the Gospel, but only to the notion of a temple.

That this was the sense of the primitive Christians, that they had no material temples, as the heathens had, is evident from their writings; for the heathens made this objection against them, that they had no temples nor images: which is owned and answered by Origen against Celsus, lib. 8. Minutius Felix, Arnobius, Lactantius, &c.

The force then of the argument is this, if under the Gospel God does not allow of so much as a temple, or symbolical presence, which he did allow of under the law, when he forbade images, much less certainly does he allow images now, which he forbid under the law. But Protestants have another argument, to prove that the worship of images is forbid by the Gospel as well as by the law; and that is, that the primitive Church always understood it so, as is evident from the writings of the ancient Fathers, who condemned the worship of images, and urged such arguments against it in their disputes with the heathens, as had easily been retorted upon themselves, had they practised the same thing; and yet this was never objected against them by their wittiest adversaries in that age, though when image worship began to be introduced into the Church, it was presently objected against the Christians both by Jews and heathens; and which is more than this, besides all the other arguments which they used, they alleged the second commandment as the reason, why they could not worship images, which is a certain proof, that they then thought the second commandment was still in force. But I shall not enlarge upon this, because it is so well done in a late discourse concerning the antiquity of the Protestant Religion, part 2, concerning images, to which I refer my reader.

XIII. "The Pope is Antichrist."

I answered,* "This has been affirmed by some Protestants, but is no article of our Church, and therefore we are not bound to prove it, but when we have a mind to it. No man ever pretended that there is any such proposition in Scripture, as that the Pope is Antichrist, but some think, that the characters of Antichrist and the Man of Sin, are much more applicable to him than the universal headship and infallibility."

To this our author answers (p. 8.), "Do only some Protestants,

* Answer to Request, p. 12.

and no homily (subscribed as containing a godly and wholesome doctrine necessary for these times, Article the fifty-fifth) [though the Church of England owns but Thirty-nine Articles;] affirm the Pope to be Antichrist? Yet we meet with no Scripture brought to prove this godly necessary doctrine."

Now, though I could tell him, that every saying in a homily has not the authority of an Article, yet I need not enter into that dispute, for I am pretty confident it is no where expressly asserted in any of our homilies that the Pope is Antichrist. The most that looks that way is in the second part of the homily for Whitsunday; where, from their opposition to some Gospel doctrine, and preferring their own decrees before the express word of God, it is proved that they are not of Christ, nor yet possessed with his Spirit. From their pride and arrogance in challenging an universal headship, and advancing themselves above sovereign princes, or in the Scripture phrase, "above all that is called God," and treating emperors and kings with the greatest insolence and scorn; our Church concludes "that they had not the Spirit of God, but the spirit of the devil; that wheresoever ye find the spirit of arrogance and pride, the spirit of envy, hatred, contention, cruelty, murder, extortion, witchcraft, necromancy, &c. assure yourselves that there is the spirit of the devil, and not of God; albeit they pretend outwardly to the world never so much holiness, that such wicked Popes as these are worthily accounted among the number of false prophets and false Christs:" so that at most the homily does but reckon these Popes in the number of false Christs, but does not make the Pope the Antichrist. It concludes with a prayer, "that God, by the comfortable Gospel of his Son, would beat down sin, death, the Pope, the devil, and all the kingdom of Antichrist;" where I confess the Pope is put in very ill company, and a fair intimation given that he may have some relation to the kingdom of Antichrist, but yet he is not expressly called Antichrist.

And therefore, as for his demand of Scripture proof, let him seek for it in those writers who expressly affirm the Pope to be Antichrist, where it may be he will find more than he will like, or can easily answer. I told him before, that the Scripture does not expressly name who is Antichrist, or the Man of Sin, but gives such characters of him, as some think the Pope of Rome has the best claim to: it is enough for us to know, that he usurps such an authority as Christ never gave him, preaches such doctrines as Christ never taught, encourages

such actions as are contrary to the true spirit of the Gospel, and that is reason enough for us to reject him.

XIV. "Every prayer used in Divine offices must be in a language vulgar and intelligible to every auditor." For the proof of this I alleged St. Paul's discourse, 1 Cor. xiv. and must now consider what he tells us is the Apostle's mind in it, * *viz.* "That whoever had the gift of a tongue strange to all the auditory, should forbear to dictate therein extempore sermons, prayers, &c. containing matter, as well as the tongue inspired into the speaker: I say this gift (of no use, but used for ostentation in such a case) was to be reserved till either the speaker or some auditor could and did interpret, that the rest might edify. Now will it follow from hence, that all the settled forms of divine offices (to many of which there is no necessity that all specially join and intend) be in the vulgar, or intelligible to every auditor? It is enough (to comply with the Apostle's doctrine) that all new extempore prayers, and instructive or exhortatory discourse (by actions, ceremonies, or circumstances, or other way not interpretable) be, as they are, in the vulgar. But for the fixed forms of Divine offices, that they be in a language the most certain and the most intelligible, not only in Christendom, but in every auditory. Intelligible, I say, where needful, to every one by either actions, ceremonies, and circumstances, or by custom, affinity with the vulgar, or books interpreting and containing prayers correspondent to every part wherein the auditory is concerned."

I have transcribed the whole, because it is as choice a paragraph as we shall ordinarily meet with. The only difficulty I see in it is to know at which end to begin to answer, for if I understand him, the beginning and conclusion of this paragraph do not well agree. In the beginning he would confine the Apostle's discourse against prayers in an unknown tongue, to inspired and extempore prayers and sermons, but that notwithstanding this, the settled forms of Divine offices may be in an unknown tongue; in the conclusion he would fain insinuate, that though the public offices of the Church of Rome be in Latin, which is not the vulgar tongue now in any nation, yet they are in a language the most certain and the most intelligible, not only in Christendom, but in every auditory. It seems he had some little qualm came over his conscience, some secret convictions that men ought to understand their prayers; and therefore he roundly asserts, that Latin is the most intel-

* Prot. Dest. p. 9.

ligible language, that is, the most known and best understood of any language in Christendom, and to every auditory. Now if this be so, what need all this dispute about service in an unknown tongue? what need of distinguishing between extempore prayers, and settled forms of Divine offices? we are all, it seems, agreed, that public prayers ought to be in an intelligible language, and that which is intelligible to every auditor; the only difference is, whether Latin be as well understood in all the auditories in England, as English is?

Well, but this is a very great riddle, and requires some skill to make it out; for our English auditories believe themselves that they do not understand Latin, but they may be mistaken for ought any body knows; let us then see how our author makes it out: "Intelligible, I say, where needful, to every one by either actions, ceremonies, and circumstances, or by custom, affinity with the vulgar, or books interpreting, and containing prayers correspondent to every part, wherein the auditory is concerned;" that is, as we use to say, you must know their meaning by their gaping; and thus forsooth, Latin is a very intelligible language to those who do not understand one word of it. What shuffling and trifling is this? Do the people understand Latin prayers, or do they not? If they don't, then the service is performed in an unknown tongue to them, which St. Paul expressly condemns; and whatever they understand about the business, yet they do not understand their prayers, which is the dispute between us: if these dumb signs can teach people their prayers, then it is lawful for them, it seems, to know their prayers, and then why may they not pray in a language which they understand? For words are more expressive of thoughts, than actions, and ceremonies, and circumstances can be, which can only tell in general what we are about, not what we say; and as for books to interpret our prayers, what need we go so far about? Why may we not pray in the vulgar tongue, as well as interpret prayers in a vulgar tongue? and what shall those do who have no books and cannot read? This is direct boy's play, to make an offer of giving something, but to pull back your hand if any one offers to take it.

Let us then consider, how he can adjust this matter with St. Paul; and the sum of what he says is this, that St. Paul only forbids inspired and extempore prayers in an unknown tongue, where there is nobody to interpret, but the settled forms of Divine offices may be in an unknown tongue for all that.

This is certainly as little as can be said, and as little to the purpose, for whoever considers the place, will find that all the Apostle's arguments are against an unknown tongue, for this very reason, because it is unknown and not understood; and then if we must not use an unknown tongue in religious worship, we must not use an unknown tongue in our settled and ordinary devotions. There are three arguments the Apostle uses, which, I think, will reach our ordinary devotions, as well as inspired gifts. 1. That it is contrary to the edification of the Church. 2. That it contradicts the natural use of speaking. 3. That it is contrary to the nature and end of prayer.

1. It is contrary to the edification of the Church. "Now, brethren, if I come unto you, speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?"* That is, unless I speak something to you, which you can understand, and which may inform your judgment;† as he adds, "In the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousands words in an unknown tongue." Now if these extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were to be valued, and used only for the edification of the Church, and to speak to the instruction of others is to be preferred before speaking in an unknown tongue by inspiration; then certainly the ordinary service and worship of God, which is instituted on purpose for the edification of the Church, must be in a known tongue, when the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit themselves must give place to edification. For if the Apostle would have made any exception, methinks he should have excepted these extraordinary gifts: for one would think, whenever the Holy Spirit inspires men, they ought to speak whatever language it be in: for it seems strange that any man should forbid these to speak, whom the Spirit inspires; and yet we see the exercise of these gifts was restrained to make them serviceable to the Church, and not to be for mere pomp and ostentation. But for men, who have no pretence to any such inspiration, to affect to speak in an unknown tongue, that they may not be understood, is to deprive the Church of the edification of religious offices, without any pretence for doing so.

2. To speak in an unknown tongue, contradicts the natural end and use of speech.* "For even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in

* 1 Cor. xiv. 6.

† Ver. 19.

‡ Vers. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification: therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." Is this argument only against inspired tongues, or against the use of all unknown tongues, among persons who do not understand them? For this relates to the use of speech in common conversation, as well as in the offices of religion; and if speech was given us to communicate our thoughts to each other; if it be so vain, and absurd, and useless a thing to talk to men in a tongue which they do not understand, it is much more absurd in religion, which does more straitly oblige us to mutual edification. For the use of words, even in prayer, is not for the sake of God, but men. God knows our thoughts, and therefore a mental prayer is as acceptable to him without vocal words; but the use of words is either to affect ourselves, and then they must be such words as we ourselves understand; or to direct others in the matter and form of their prayers, and then they must be such words as they understand; or to unite the affections and desires of the whole congregation at the same time in the same petitions, which is essential to public worship; and then they must be such words as we all understand; but to speak words which no body understands, is to speak to no purpose, which is absurd in common conversation, but profane in religion.

3rdly, Another argument St. Paul uses against an unknown tongue, is, that it is contrary to the nature of prayer and religious worship, which must be a reasonable service, and therefore requires the exercise of the understanding, as well as affections. "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then, I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned" (that is, every ordinary Christian, who has not this gift of tongues, or of interpreting tongues; for there were no clerks in those days to say Amen for the whole congregation), "say

Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?"* And if the exercise of supernatural gifts themselves, which the Apostle seems here to call praying by the Spirit, be not an acceptable worship to God, without the acts of our reason and understanding, certainly an unknown tongue is much more unjustifiable in our ordinary devotions. If the whole congregation must say Amen to those prayers which are offered to God, and it be a ludicrous thing to say Amen to what we do not understand, then whether the prayers be inspired or composed, it is necessary that the whole congregation should understand them.

But our author (though very timorously) insinuates an answer or two to this one reason, why he thinks the settled forms of Divine offices are tacitly excepted by the Apostle, and need not be performed in the vulgar, and intelligible to every auditor, comes in in a parenthesis, and indeed was as fit for a parenthesis as any thing could be; for he will presently see, that it might have been spared: "To many of which (Divine offices) there is no necessity that all specially join and intend:" by which, I suppose, he means, that there are several offices in the Church of Rome, which people are not bound to attend to, nor join in, and therefore there is no need they should understand them.

1. Now, in the first place, I desire to know why there should be any such Divine offices in public worship, which the people are not bound to join in? Methinks the Apostle's argument against speaking in an unknown tongue, because it is contrary to edification, holds as well, and for the same reason, against such offices as these, which certainly are not much for edification, when people are not bound to join in them; unless every thing in public worship must be done for edification, and therefore must be understood by the people who are to be edified by it, the Apostle's argument against these inspired tongues is not good; for if our author had been present when St. Paul wrote this, he could have easily answered him, that there was no need that the whole congregation should understand these inspired men; but let those understand who could, and if no body understood it, what hurt did it do? Nay, the exercise of such extraordinary gifts did edify those who saw and heard, though they did not understand; and when the Spirit inspires men to speak in unknown tongues, we have reason to think,

* 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 15, 16.

that the Spirit did not intend that every one should understand them ; and that is reason to believe, that the exercise of such gifts was very fitting, though they were not understood. Let our author try now how he can justify St. Paul's argument against unknown, though inspired tongues, upon the principle which he has laid down, that the people are not bound to join in all the offices of public worship ; that any thing may be done in public worship, which is not for public edification : or let him try if he can say half so much for such settled forms of Divine offices, as people are not bound to join in, and therefore not bound to understand, as may be pleaded for the occasional exercise of miraculous and inspired gifts in an unknown tongue : and if he cannot, then this answer he gives about such offices as people are not bound to join in, is a better answer to St. Paul, than it is to Protestants ; a much better vindication of the exercise of such unknown tongues, than of the use of Latin service where Latin is an unknown tongue.

For, secondly, I would ask our author, whether there be any offices of religion, which people are bound to attend to, and to join in ? His saying, that there are many, which they are not bound to attend to, supposes, that there are some, which they are bound to attend to, and to join in ; and his making this an argument for service in an unknown tongue, that there are many offices, which they are not bound to attend to, and therefore not to understand (for there must be the force of his argument, if it have any) ; supposes, that they must understand what they must attend to, and join in : how then does this justify the Latin service of the Church of Rome ? For their whole service is in Latin, an unknown tongue ; and therefore, according to his reason, the people are not bound to attend to, or join in any part of their worship, because they understand none of it. And is not that a pretty kind of public worship, which nobody is bound to attend to, or join in ? Not the priest himself, when he does not understand Latin, which, as they say, too often happens in Catholic countries.

3rdly, Since our author says, that there are only *many*, not *all* Divine offices, which the people are not bound to join in, he would have done well to have given us some mark of distinction, that we might have known what offices people must join in, and what not. For I cannot for my life think of any act of public Christian worship, which all Christians are not bound to join in. I should think it very convenient, that all Christians

should attend to, and join in the holy sacraments when they are administered; for if they must not bear their parts there (which must be their own act, or it signifies nothing, it being a making and renewing a solemn vow and covenant with God), to be sure they can be concerned in nothing else: and therefore the offices of baptism and the Lord's supper, ought to be administered in the vulgar tongue, that every body may understand them.

Thus, if men are bound to pray to God, and to praise him, surely they are bound to join in public prayers and praises; and then, according to this rule, the public prayers and hymns of the Church ought to be in the vulgar tongue. And I cannot imagine a reason why the people ought not to attend to reading the Lessons, the Epistles, and Gospels; for I know no other use of reading them, but that the people might hear, and understand them, and be edified by them; and then they also should be in the vulgar tongue. In short, there is nothing in an office of religion, but what the people are concerned in, and therefore must attend to it, and join in it, unless it be not their duty to attend to and join in the worship of God: and therefore our author, by insinuating this principle, that people must understand what they are bound to attend to and join in (which is so agreeable to common sense, that he could not resist it), has effectually overthrown and condemned the Latin service, unless he can prove, that people are not concerned to join in the worship of God; and then I desire to know, why they must be present at it?

4. But suppose, as he says, that there were no necessity that all should specially join, and attend to all religious offices, yet were it not better that they should? Were it not more for the edification of the Church, and of every particular Christian, that they should understand their prayers, and all join in the same petitions, with the same devout affections, than that they should only gaze upon the priest, and be not worshippers, but mere spectators of religious worship? Now if it be better to understand our prayers, than not to understand them, to offer up a reasonable, than unreasonable service to God; if it be better to worship God, than merely to see him worshipped; then how can he justify service in an unknown tongue? For when the Apostle disputes against speaking with unknown tongues, the argument whereon he founds the unlawfulness of it, is, that it is against edification; and this argument must

hold against Latin service, unless ignorance edifies more than knowledge ; which I believe at this time of day, our author will not care to say.

Secondly, His next answer is what I before took notice of ; that the people do understand their prayers, though they be in Latin. The meaning of which, is no more but this ; that by frequent attendance at mass, and observing the actions and ceremonies used by the priest, some of them understand where about the priest is, and what he is a doing : they know, when they hear the bell, and see the elevation of the host, that they must fall down and worship, &c. but do not understand one word that is said. But this is only to understand the actions and ceremonies, not the words ; and cannot answer the end of public prayer, which is to offer up our common petitions to God with our heart and mind. The use of words in public prayer, is to direct and determine our thoughts, and to excite our affections ; for this reason the priest reads the prayers with an audible voice, that all the people may join with him, and these indeed are public and common prayers ; but now in the Church of Rome, the priest reads the prayers, but the people do not join with him, because they do not understand him ; but the most they can do, is by actions and ceremonies, to guess at what part of the service he is, and either only look on, or if they be very devout, entertain themselves with some good pious thoughts, or put up some private prayers to God, or it may be to the Virgin Mary, or some saint, while the priest is saying mass ; and thus the priest prays by himself, and the people, if they do pray, pray by themselves, and have no other benefit of the public offices of the Church, but only to see what the priest does, which at best can only fill them with some religious amusements, or with confused, and indistinct, and enthusiastic devotions. It is plain, that in the Church of Rome, the devotions of the people are left to their own extempore conceits, which is a thousand times worse than the extempore prayers of the preachers, who may be men of parts and learning, and able to suggest very proper petitions, and very pious thoughts, and to excite very devout passions in their hearers ; and is it not very odd that the Church should have settled forms of Divine offices, composed forms of prayer and praise, and yet the people, who will pray, must be left to their extempore devotions ; is this also for the edification of the Church ? Is not this fanaticism with a witness ?

To conclude this argument, I know no practice in the world

more directly contrary to the sense of all mankind, than prayers in an unknown tongue. There was no nation, nor religion in the world ever professedly guilty of it, but the Church of Rome ; and there can be no reason imaginable, why they should conceal their worship, unless they are ashamed of it, or suspect that no disinterested man can like it when he knows it ; and it is as odd a task to prove that men must understand their prayers, as it would be to prove that the use of speech is to be understood.

XV. "A company of Christians voluntarily separating from all other Christian societies, condemning their doctrines and rites, destitute also of any visible correspondence with them in the eucharist, in any religious assemblies or solemn devotions ; can, notwithstanding this perverse, entire, and manifest separation, be a mystical member of Christ in catholic unity, and a charitable part of the catholic Church."

In answer to this, I told him,* that "if he applies this to us, it is manifestly false ; for though we do not communicate with the Church of Rome in her corrupt worship, yet there are many Christian Churches with which we can and do communicate ; and separate ourselves no farther from any society of Christians, than they separate themselves from the Primitive and Apostolic Church ; that if the Church of England be a true Apostolic Church in faith, and worship and government, and separates from other Churches only upon account of such corruptions as will justify a separation, what should hinder her from being a mystical member of Christ, in catholic unity, and a charitable part of the catholic Church ? For a true Apostolic faith and worship does certainly make us the mystical members of Christ's body, or else I desire to know what does ? That catholic unity is not violated by a just separation, and dangerous corruptions in faith and worship are a just cause of separation. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord ; and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you," 2 Cor. vi. 17.

All that our author replies to this, is, that "this proposition relates to matter of fact, which we affirm Protestants to have done,† and desire them to make out by Scripture the lawfulness of it, and its consistency with catholic unity and charity." But I denied that we had done this, and gave him in short my

* Answer to Request, p. 13.

† Protestantism destitute of Scripture Proofs, p. 10.

reasons why I denied it, which methinks might have deserved some notice : and as for our separation from the corruptions of the Church of Rome, that I gave him my reasons for, and such as, it seems, he had no mind to answer. That separation might sometimes be lawful and necessary, and therefore not chargeable with schism, nor a breach of catholic unity, I proved from the text now quoted, "Come out from among them," &c. to which he says, "If I intend this for a proof, then it must import that it is the duty of one Christian, or a party pretending to be a national Church, to come out of the catholic Church, and be separate from her ; less than this will not reach the Protestant case, and so much as this will by no means agree with one holy Church, wherein alone the communion of saints, remission of sins, and life everlasting are to be found."

But how is this the Protestant case ? How does separation from the Church of Rome, and that no farther neither than she is corrupt, come to be a separation from the catholic Church ? He knows that we deny the Church of Rome to be the catholic Church, and we know that he can never prove it to be so ; and whatever Church or Churches have corrupted the faith and worship of Christ, we shall make no suruple at all to separate from them in such corruptions, and have the whole Gospel to justify us in it ; for in such cases, we are under the same obligation to separate, that we are to profess the true faith, and practise the true worship of Christ.

All that can be charged upon the Church of England is, that she renounced the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and denied obedience and subjection to that see, which never had any Divine right to claim it : and that she reformed those errors in doctrine, and corruptions in worship, which she formerly was guilty of. This charge we readily own, but deny that this is schism, or separation from the catholic Church.

For till our author can prove, than the unity of the catholic Church consists in subjection to the Bishop of Rome, it is ridiculous to charge us with breaking catholic unity, by denying that obedience which we do not owe ; and when he can prove it essential to catholic unity, to submit to the Bishop of Rome, as the visible head of the Church, we will own ourselves to be schismatics. But then I must mind him what he has to prove, *viz.* that by a Divine institution the Bishop of Rome is the visible head of unity, to whom all Churches must submit ; for nothing can be essential to the unity of the Church, but what

Christ himself has made so; and what is not absolutely essential, may be changed and altered, when there is absolute necessity for it, without a sinful breach of unity. And therefore, though they cannot make good their claim to this universal supremacy,* not so much as by ecclesiastical canons and constitutions, and ancient customs, as has been often proved by learned Protestants; yet to shorten that dispute, which to be sure none but learned men can be judges of, whatever jurisdiction or primacy they pretend to, to have been formerly granted by ancient Councils to the Bishop of Rome, may be retrenched or denied without the guilt of schism, when it proves a manifest oppression of the Christian Church, and serves only to justify and perpetuate the most notorious and intolerable corruptions of the Christian religion. And the reason is very plain, because all human constitutions are alterable; and what is alterable, ought to be altered, when the indispensable necessities of the Church and of religion require it. Catholic unity requires no superiority, or jurisdiction of one bishop or one Church over another, but only mutual concord and brotherly correspondence; and therefore a Church which rejects any foreign jurisdiction, may yet maintain catholic unity, as the African churches did in St. Cyprian's days. The combination indeed of neighbour churches and bishops, for the more convenient exercise of ecclesiastical discipline and government, we grant was very ancient, and is of great use to this day; but if such combinations as these degenerate from their first institution, and by the tyranny and encroachments of some usurping bishops are improved into a temporal monarchy, and invasion upon the inherent rights and liberties of all other bishops and churches, I would desire to know why these oppressed bishops and churches may not vindicate their own rights and liberties, and cast off such an intolerable yoke?

No, you will say, when such a superiority and subordination of churches is ordered and decreed by General Councils, which is the supreme authority in the Church, no change nor alteration can be made but by an equal authority; and therefore no particular bishops or churches can reject any such jurisdiction, unless it be revoked by a General Council, without the guilt of schism.

Now in answer to this, let us consider, 1. Suppose such an

* See Dr. Barrow's Treatise of Supremacy.

aspiring bishop has usurped such an authority, as was never originally granted him by any Council; that he has improved a primacy of order (which yet is more than the Nicene canons granted to the bishop of Rome), into a supremacy of jurisdiction, and has enlarged his patriarchate beyond its original bounds, may not that be taken away without a General Council, which was usurped indeed, but never given?

2ndly, Suppose a General Council had granted what it had no right to give; as it must have done, if ever any General Council had granted or confirmed the Pope's pretensions, of being the universal bishop and visible head of the Church, and the fountain of all ecclesiastical authority, and granted away these rights and powers, which are inherent in every Church, and inseparable from the episcopal office. For it is not in ecclesiastical as it is in civil rights; men may irrevocably grant away their own civil rights and liberties, but all the authority in the Church cannot give away itself, nor grant the whole entire episcopacy, with all the rights and powers of it, to any one bishop. If bishops will not exercise that power which Christ has given them, they are accountable to their Lord for it; but they cannot give it away, neither from themselves, nor from their successors; for it is theirs only to use, not to part with; and therefore every bishop may re-assume such rights, though a General Council should give them away, because the grant is void in itself.

3rdly, Especially when the regular means of redress is made impossible by such usurpations; when the Christian Church is so enslaved to the will and pleasure of one domineering bishop, that there can be no General Council unless he call it, and preside in it, and confirm it by his own authority; and how impossible it is this way to cast off such an usurping power, when the usurper must be the judge in his own cause, I need not prove, especially when Christian princes and bishops are so devoted to the see of Rome, either linked to it by secular interests, or overawed by superstition, that it is in vain to expect that such a Council should redress such abuses, as they themselves are fond of; or if they would have them redressed if they could, yet dare not venture to attempt it; must all bishops now and churches quietly submit to such usurpations, because the greatest number of them will not, or dare not, vindicate their own rights? Is it then unlawful for Christian bishops to exercise that authority which Christ has given them (and of which they must give an account), if they happen to

be out-voted by other bishops? I grant the less number of bishops cannot make laws for the universal Church, in opposition to the greater numbers; whatever constitutions owe their authority to mutual consent, must in all reason be confirmed and over-ruled by the greater numbers: but the less number, nay, any single bishop may observe the institutions of our Saviour, and exercise that authority which he has given him, without asking leave of General Councils, nay, in opposition to them; for the authority and institution of our Saviour is beyond all the General Councils in the world.

4. Especially when we have the consent of much the greater number of bishops, without their meeting in a General Council. All the Eastern bishops, which are much more numerous than the Western, I cannot say have cast off the authority of the bishop of Rome, because they never owned it, but yet they oppose and reject his authority, as much as the bishops of England do; and therefore our Reformers in casting off the Pope, did nothing but what they had the authority of the whole Eastern Church to justify; which I take to be as good as a Council of Western bishops, though they may call it General: for the business of a Council in such cases, is not to consent to some new laws, but to declare ancient and original rights; and if we have their authentic declarations in this matter, we need no more: for we do not so much want their authority, as their judgment in this point. It is a very daring thing to oppose the universal consent of the whole Christian Church; and no private bishops, nor national combination of bishops, would be able to bear up against such a prejudice; but when we have the concurrent opinions of the greatest number of Christian bishops, we need not much concern ourselves for want of the formality of a Western Council, who are interested parties. Yes, you will say, at least the Church of England was subject to the jurisdiction of the Western Patriarch, and therefore ought not to have innovated without the patriarchal authority, and a patriarchal Council, nor to have rejected the patriarchal authority, which was confirmed by ancient Councils. Now, not to dispute this at present, whether England were subject to the bishop of Rome,* as the Western Patriarch, which it is certain our British bishops, when Austin the monk came into England, would not own; and which was never granted by any ancient General Council: and the submission of the English

* See Dr. Stillingfleet's *Origines Britan.* p. 106, &c.

bishops afterwards by fear or flattery, could never give such a right as should oblige all their successors for future ages ; yet I say this patriarchal authority is not the dispute between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. Our Reformers took no notice of the patriarchal authority, but the universal headship and supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, as is evident from the Articles of our Church, in which there is no mention of it : and this was such an usurpation as might be renounced, without the authority of any Council, as I have already shewn. Indeed his patriarchal authority, if he had any, necessarily fell with it : for when he challenges such an exorbitant power, so far exceeding the bounds and limits of a patriarchal authority, and will exercise all, if he exercise any, and will hold communion with none upon any other terms, and will not be confined to a mere patriarchal jurisdiction, we must necessarily renounce all subjection to him, to deliver ourselves from his usurpations ; when his pretended patriarchate is swallowed up in his universal headship, he may thank himself, if he forfeits what he might, with a better appearance, make some pretence to, by challenging so much more than ever was his right. And the patriarchal authority itself, could he have made any pretences to it, which he never could over the Church of England, which was originally a free and independent Church, being but a human constitution, may be renounced without schism, when necessity requires it ; and certainly, if ever there can be any necessity for such a rupture, it becomes necessary then, when it swells into a boundless and unlimited authority, to the oppression of the whole Christian Church in her essential rights and liberties.

Fifthly, There is one thing more I would have observed for the right stating of this dispute about schism, *viz.* the difference between schism from the Catholic Church, and the breach of ecclesiastical communion between different Churches. In the first sense schism cuts us off from the body of Christ, and consequently puts us out of a state of salvation ; and therefore it can be nothing less than a separation from the communion of the Church in things essential to faith, or worship, or government ; for, in this sense, no man can be a schismatic, without, in some degree or other, forfeiting his Christianity, and his essential right to Christian communion.

Ecclesiastical communion is the union of several distinct churches into one ecclesiastical body, for mutual advice and counsel, and the more pure administration of discipline. When

several bishops, who have originally all the same authority in the government of their several churches, bestow different powers on some bishops, whom they advance above others with the title and authority of metropolitans, or patriarchs, with a power of calling synods, and receiving appeals, and the principal authority of ordinations ; and govern their several churches by such ecclesiastical laws, as are agreed on by common consent, or the major vote ; this is a very useful constitution, and of great antiquity in the Church, if it had not its beginning in the Apostles' times ; and for any bishop or Church causelessly to break such a confederacy as this, is a very great evil, and has the guilt and crime of schism ; but yet it does not seem to be such a schism as divides the intrinsic unity of the catholic Church, and cuts off such a Church from the body of Christ. For the unity of the catholic Church consists in one faith, and worship, and charity, and such an external communion, when occasion offers, shews, that we are all the disciples of the same common Lord and Saviour, and own each other for brethren ; but the Church may be the one body of Christ, without being one ecclesiastical body, under one governing head, which it is impossible the whole Christian Church should be ; and therefore a Church which divides itself from that ecclesiastical body, to which it did once belong, if it have just and necessary reasons for what it does, is wholly blameless, nay, commendable for it ; if it have not, it sins according to the nature and aggravation of the crime ; but still may be a member of the catholic Church, and still enjoy all the privileges of a true catholic Church, "the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the promises of everlasting life : " which shews us how the holy catholic Church in the Creed may be one, notwithstanding all those divisions of Christendom, which are occasioned by the quarrels of bishops, and the disputes about ecclesiastical canons, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Those who are the beginners, or fomentors of such divisions, shall answer it to their Lord and Judge, as they shall all their other personal miscarriages : but it would be very hard, if such a Church, which in its faith and worship is truly catholic, should be cut off from the body of Christ, and all the members of it put out of a state of salvation, because the bishops and pastors of such churches think fit to divide themselves from that ecclesiastical body, to which they were united by custom, or ancient canons. Now this is the most they can make of our forsaking the ecclesiastical communion of the Church of

Rome ; that we have divided ourselves from the bishop of Rome, to whom by custom, or some pretended canons, we owed obedience and subjection ; which I have proved to be very innocent in us, because it was necessary : but suppose it were a causeless and criminal separation, yet it is only an ecclesiastical schism, which does not separate us from the catholic Church, though it does from that ecclesiastical body, of which the bishop of Rome makes himself the head.

This, I think, is a sufficient justification of the Church of England in rejecting the authority of the Church of Rome ; and her reforming the errors and corruptions of faith and worship, needs no defence at all, though there were never a pure and reformed Church in the world besides herself. For I would desire our author to tell me, whether it be a fault to reform the corruptions of faith and worship. Can it be a fault then to believe as Christ has taught, and to worship God as he has prescribed ? Is it possible that the true catholic faith and worship should ever be a crime ? If it be not, then it can be no fault to make the doctrines and institutions of our Saviour, the rule of our faith and worship ; and that is all that we mean by reforming, not to mend Christian religion, but to return to primitive Christianity. To cast such doctrines out of our creed, as Christ never taught, and to reject all new and suspected worships : and if it be always a duty to profess what Christ and his Apostles have taught, and to practise as they have commanded ; then if ever we believed or practised otherwise, it is necessary to reform ; which is not in a proper sense to reform the Church, or the Christian faith and worship, but to reform ourselves. For the Christian faith and worship is always the same ; and if there be anything to be reformed, it must be our own errors and mistakes.

What then is the fault of the Church of England ? Why cannot she be a mystical member of Christ in catholic unity, or a charitable part of the catholic Church ? The charge is drawn up against her, under three heads. 1. That she voluntarily separates from all other Christian societies. 2. Condemns their doctrines and rites. 4. Has no visible correspondence with them in the eucharist, nor in any religious assemblies, nor solemn devotions. Let us consider these distinctly.

1. The Church of England voluntarily separates from all other Christian societies. This I told him was false as to

matter of fact ; for there are a great many Christian societies which we can, and do hold communion with, as opportunity serves ; and he can never make good this charge, but by denying, that there are any other Christian societies besides the Church of Rome ; which, I suppose, is what he intends. Well ! we do separate, he says, and that voluntarily from the Church of Rome, that is, from all Christian societies. Now I grant we do separate from the bishop and the Church of Rome, considered as the principle and centre of catholic unity, as I observed before ; but considered as a Christian Church, so I deny, that we separate from the Church of Rome, or any other Christian Church, as far as they are Christian, and we are bound to communicate with them no farther. For, I pray, consider what Christian communion is, which certainly is nothing else but to communicate in the true Christian faith and worship ; for to communicate in Judaism, Paganism, Mahometism, or any unchristian doctrines or practices, certainly is not Christian communion : and therefore every Church is more or less perfect in Christian communion, according to the purity and perfection of her faith and worship. If then the Church of England professes the true Christian faith, and worships God according to the Gospel of his Son, without any corrupt mixtures and innovations, as far as true faith and worship reaches, she is in communion with all the Christian Churches in the world ; for she agrees with them in all that they believe or practise, which is truly Christian, and Christian communion extends no farther.

Well, but when the whole Church was agreed in faith and worship, we broke this bond of unity by a pretended reformation. Suppose this, the question still is, whether this unity of the Church was a Christian communion ? for if it were not, it is no separation from the Christian Church, to leave its communion in those things which are not Christian : and therefore the whole controversy will still turn upon this point, whether the reformation of the Church of England be a true Gospel reformation ; for if we reformed nothing but what ought to be reformed, then we separated no farther than we ought to separate ; and such a separation, if you will call it a separation, I hope, is no crime. Did Elias separate from the Jewish Church, because he broke their unity in the worship of Baal, and reduced them to the institutions of the Mosaic law, which was the standard of their religion and communion ? Just so the Church of England separated from the Church of

Rome, by rejecting those articles of faith, and forms of worship which are not Christian. Some kind of separation indeed there must be, between a pure and a corrupt Church, but if you would know on which side the separation is criminal, you must consider on which side the corruption is ; for necessary truths can never make a criminal separation. The Church which forsakes the truth, is always guilty of the separation, not the Church which forsakes errors ; and therefore it is a ridiculous thing to charge those with the schism, who only forsake the company, when those are the schismatics who forsake the truth. And yet this is the only pretence for the Church of Rome to charge us with schism, that they did not leave us, but we left them ; they kept where they were, and we went out from among them, and forsook their communion ; but it was because they had first forsaken the Apostolic communion, by corrupting the Apostolic faith and worship. They were the deserters and separatists, we only returned to the true Christian communion, and were very sorry to leave them behind us. The short of it is this ; if we cannot justify our Reformation, we are schismatics ; if we can, we are none : and I would desire all Protestants to take notice of this short answer, and stick to it ; for it is as certain as any demonstration in Euclid, that no man can be a schismatic, who forsakes no society of Christians any farther than they forsake the truth.

2. The next charge is, that we condemn their doctrines and their rites ; but do we condemn anything which ought not to be condemned ? If we do, it is indeed a fault ; but if we do not, why are we blamed for it ?

3. We have no visible correspondence with them in the eucharist, nor in any religious assemblies, nor solemn devotions. How so ? We visibly receive the eucharist ourselves, and perform our solemn devotions in public assemblies, and this is to communicate with the whole Christian Church in the same sacraments and worship, and the only way that distant churches have to communicate with each other in sacraments and worship ; unless he thinks the Church of England must travel into France, and Spain, and Italy, into Greece and Egypt, and all other remote Churches to communicate with them.

No, but when their worship is brought home to us, we refuse to join with them ; right ! for, according to the laws of catholic communion, when they are in England, they ought to communicate with us, not we with them, according to St.

Austin's rule, to observe the rites and usages of the Church, whithersoever we come, as far as they are innocent ; if we denied to receive them to our communion, they might with better reason charge us with schism ; but we are not bound to forsake the communion of our own Church to follow foreign customs at home.

But when we do come where their worship is the established religion, we still refuse to communicate with them : we do so indeed with the Roman Church, but not with all other Christian societies ; and the reason is because we believe their worship is sinful, and no Christian is bound to communicate in a sinful worship, as they themselves must grant : so that still this whole controversy issues in this, whether the terms of their communion be not sinful ; if they be, this will justify our non-communication with them ; if they be not, we are schismatics, and by this we are willing to stand or fall.

So that this charge of schism upon the Church of England is very absurd and ridiculous, unless they can charge us with schismatical doctrines and practices ; if we separate for the sake of a corrupt faith or worship, we are schismatics indeed : but if we separate, only because we will not profess any erroneous doctrines, nor communicate in a corrupt worship ; unless the true faith and true worship can make men schismatics, we may very securely scorn such an accusation.

And it is as impertinent a question to ask us what Church we joined in communion with, when we forsook the communion of the Church of Rome : for if, by joining in communion with other Churches, they mean uniting ourselves in one ecclesiastical body with them, putting ourselves under the government of any other patriarch, so we joined in communion with no other Church, and there was no reason we should ; for we were originally a free independent Church, which owed no subjection to any other Church, but had a plenary power to decide all controversies among ourselves, without appealing to any foreign jurisdiction ; and when we had delivered ourselves from one usurper, there was no reason to court a new one, this not being necessary to catholic unity and communion.

If in joining in communion with other Churches, they mean, what other Churches we made the pattern of our Reformation, we freely confess we made no Church of that age our pattern ; but I think we did much better, for we made the Scriptures our rule, and the primitive and apostolical Churches our pattern, which we take to be a more infallible direction

than the example of any Church then or now: if we must have been confined to the faith and practice of other Churches then in being, without regard to a more infallible rule, and a more unquestionable authority, I confess I should have chose to have continued in the Church of Rome, which had the most visible and flourishing authority of any other Church at that time: but our Reformers did believe, and very rightly, that no Church had any authority against the Scriptures and primitive practice, and then they were not concerned to inquire whether any other Church did in all things believe and practise as they taught, but what the faith and practice of the Apostles and their immediate successors was; and yet they very well know, that most of their doctrines and practices, which they condemned in the Church of Rome, were condemned by other Churches also, though it may be those other Churches might have some less errors and corruptions of their own. If the Scriptures and the example of the primitive Churches, be a sufficient authority to justify a reformation, then the Church of England is blameless, though no other Church in the world followed this pattern but ourselves; for this is the rule and pattern which they ought all to follow, and if they do not, it is not we are to blame, but themselves.

And yet, what if I should say, that our Reformers made the Church of Rome herself, the pattern of our Reformation? and indeed this is the plain truth of the case. For we framed no new creeds, no new articles of faith, no new forms of worship, no new models of government, but retained all that is ancient and apostolic in the Church of Rome, and only rejected those corruptions and innovations, which were introduced in several ages, and confirmed altogether by the Council of Trent. Our faith is contained in the Apostles, Nicene, Athanasian Creeds, which are all owned by the Church of Rome, and were the ancient faith of the catholic Church. We own the two Christian sacraments, baptism and the Lord's supper, which were expressly instituted by our Saviour himself, and which the Church of Rome owns. We worship one God through Jesus Christ, who is that one Mediator between God and men, as the Church of Rome confesses, though she brings in a great many other mediators by the help of a distinction. Our public Liturgy is so conformed to the ancient Liturgies of the Roman Church, that it has been often objected to us, though very peevishly and absurdly, by Dissenters, that our Common Prayer is taken out of the Mass-book: our

litanies, collects, hymns, are many of them taken out of the old Latin liturgies, only we have changed the Popish legends into lessons out of the Old and New Testaments, and have left out prayers to saints, and all the corruptions of the mass, and other superstitions : so that in truth the Church of England is the exact resemblance of the Church of Rome in her state of primitive purity, before her faith and worship were corrupted with new and superstitious additions ; and it is plain that this was the rule of our Reformation, not to form and model a new Church, but only to purge the Church from all new corruptions, and to leave the old foundation and building as it was ; and if we have indeed retained all that is ancient and apostolic in the Church of Rome, and rejected nothing but innovations in faith, and corruptions in worship, they need not inquire for a Church which believes all that we do, for the Church of Rome herself does so, and if they believe more than they should, it is no fault that we do not believe all that they do : and therefore we had no need to seek for any other Church to join with ; for we stayed where we were, and did not leave our Church, but reform it : and a man who does not pull down his house, but only cleanses it, and makes it a more wholesome habitation, needs not inquire for a new house to dwell in.

To conclude this argument, our positive faith and worship is the same still with the Church of Rome's, and therefore they cannot blame us for it ; and in those doctrines and practices wherein we have forsaken the Church of Rome, we have the authority and practice of most other Churches to justify us, which do not own the supremacy of the Pope, nor transubstantiation, nor purgatory, nor communion in one kind, nor Latin service, nor the worship of images, with several other of the Trent innovations : so that, in truth, we are so far from separating from all Christian societies, that there are few things in our Reformation, but what are owned and justified either by the Church of Rome herself, or by some other Churches ; not to take notice now, that there are few things in our Reformation but what some doctors of the Roman communion, have either justified, or spoke modestly of.

XVI. "The whole clergy of the Catholic Church may apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness, whilst part of a national laity may preserve both, discover the clergies' defection, and depriving them, heap to themselves teachers of their own sending and instruction."

In answer to this I told him,* “that if by this he meant, that the whole of the Christian world did at the time of the Reformation maintain the doctrines of the Church of Rome, which were rejected and condemned only by a major vote of a Parliament of laymen in England, all the world knew how false it is. For, 1. There were many other Churches, and better parts of the catholic Church than the Church of Rome, which did not own those doctrines and corruptions which we reject. 2. Nay the whole clergy of the Roman Church did not; for many of our English bishops and clergy were as zealous for the Reformation as any laymen; so were the German Reformers,” who were originally Popish monks and priests, and yet did not follow the laity, but led them the way to the Reformation.

In reply to this, he says,† “I manifest myself meanly versed in the story of my own party, or no friend to ingenuity and truth. For it is certainly true, and attested by Protestant historians and records, that all the bishops, and the whole convocation declare against lay-supremacy and other Protestant points, and for non-compliance therewith, were almost all deprived: the Queen and her lay-parliament enacting supremacy, whereby she imposed new doctrines, displaced the catholic clergy, and created prelatie ministers.” And whether he or I be most in the right, let the reader judge. For, 1. It is plain I did not speak only of the clergy of England, but of the whole clergy of the catholic Church, as he himself stated the question; and he answers only to the clergy of England, and with what truth shall be examined presently: for if the whole clergy of the catholic Church have not apostatized, whatever the clergy of the Church of Rome has done, he loses the very foundation of his request to us, to prove that the whole clergy of the Catholic Church have apostatized from fundamental truth and holiness, for we are not bound to prove that which is false; but he who allows no Catholic Church but the Church of Rome, must consequently allow no clergy of the Catholic Church, but the Roman clergy, but we grant neither one nor the other; and yet, as I shewed, the Roman clergy themselves were the first Reformers, and therefore what he insinuates cannot be true, that the whole Roman clergy opposed the Roman laity in the Reformation.

2. As for the English Reformation, he confines it in his answer only to the story of Queen Elizabeth, and what was

* Answer to Request.

† Protestantism destitute of Scripture Proofs.

done in her reign ; but the article he would have proved, and the answer I gave to it has no such limitation ; and I must still repeat, that all the world knows, and the histories and records of our Church assure us, that the Popish bishops and convocations in Henry VIII.'s days, did acknowledge the King's supremacy, and in higher terms than Queen Elizabeth would challenge it. Indeed the late Oxford writer,* or rather publisher of books, charges this upon that force they were under ; that is, that the clergy was taken in a *præmunire*, and the King would not compound the business with them, unless they acknowledged him to be the head of the Church. But does this prove that they did not make this recognition ? If force or flattery can corrupt the whole clergy, then it seems the whole clergy of the (Roman) Catholic Church may apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness, if they fall first into a *præmunire*, and meet with a King who will take the advantage of it ; and are not the clergy then admirable guides to follow ? especially if they can be so overawed, as not only to make such a profession, but to write and dispute for it, and use all variety of arguments to persuade people to believe it.

The Institution for the Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man,† was agreed on in convocation, and published by authority. Bishop Gardiner wrote a book, *de vera Obedientia*, to which Bonner prefixed a preface upon the same argument. Stokesly, bishop of London, and Tonstal, bishop of Durham, wrote in defence of the King's proceedings to Cardinal Pole ; and many sermons were preached by several bishops to the same purpose ; out of which Dr. Burnet has collected the arguments used by them, both against the power of the Pope, and for the supremacy of the King : and during that session of Parliament, which took away the power of the Pope in the year 1534, a bishop preached every Sunday at St. Paul's Cross, and taught the people, that the Pope had no authority in England. Was all this matter of force too, and fear of the *præmunire*, which was pardoned in Parliament, A.D. 1531, three years before ?

Let us now consider what passed under Queen Elizabeth : and methinks, what was good doctrine in King Henry's time, should be good doctrine still : and yet it is true, that many bishops then did protest against the Act for Supremacy, and refused the oath when it was offered them ; and that many of

* Church Government, part 5. English Reformation, chap. 2. p. 21.

† Burnet's History of the Reformation. Part 1. Book 2. p. 137.

those bishops who had wrote, or preached for it before, such as Bonner, bishop of London, and Tonsal of Durham, which seems to lessen their authority in this matter ; and when the nation had so lately had the sense of the whole English Roman Clergy in this point, their present obstinacy to confirm their former opinions, without answering their former reasons, was no sufficient cause why a lay-Parliament should not renew such laws without the consent of the clergy, which were at first made with it: not a bishop dissenting, excepting Fisher, bishop of Rochester: and whereas he talks in such a strain, as if this were opposed by the whole clergy, and that they were almost all deprived for it, the account which the visitors gave the Queen, is very different, that of 9,400 beneficed men in England,* there were no more than fourteen bishops, six abbots, twelve deans, twelve archdeacons, fifteen heads of colleges, fifty prebendaries, and eighty rectors of parishes, that had left their benefices upon account of religion, which is a very inconsiderable number to the whole.

3. I answered farther, “that we do not say, that the Roman Church herself has apostatized from fundamental truth and holiness. We do grant, that they have retained the true faith and worship of Christ, though they have fatally corrupted both, by additions of their own.” And therefore we are not bound to prove, that the whole clergy of the Catholic Church may apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness ; for we do not say they did.

All that he replies to this, is, that “this apostasy (at the least) is taught in the 19th and 21st Articles, and Homilies against the Peril of Idolatry.” That is to say (for I suppose that is his meaning), that the Church of England charges the Church of Rome with idolatry, and idolatry is an apostasy from fundamental truth and holiness. But if men may be guilty of some kinds of idolatry, and of very great corruptions in faith and worship, without denying any fundamental article of the Christian faith, then idolatry itself does not prove such an apostasy from fundamental truth. And this is the opinion of those who own the Church of Rome a true, though a corrupt Church, notwithstanding they charge her with idolatrous practices. For they consider that the Jewish Church was guilty of idolatry in the worship of the golden calf, and the calves at Dan and Bethel, and yet were a true Church still ; because they worshipped only the true God, the God of Israel,

* Burnet's History of the Reformation, Part 2. l. 3. p. 401.

though in an idolatrous manner. And I would advise our author not to insist too peremptorily on this, that idolatry is an apostasy from fundamental truth, till he is sure that he can clear himself, and his Church, from the charge of idolatry. I know very well what he aims at, to disprove the charge of idolatry, because idolatry is an apostasy from fundamental truth and holiness : and thus the Church cannot apostatize, and therefore cannot commit idolatry ; which is like their proving, that the Church has not erred, because it cannot err : whereas if *de facto* it appears that the Church has erred, that is a demonstration that it can err. Thus if *de facto* it appears that the Church is guilty of idolatry, this is a demonstration, that either idolatry is not such a fundamental apostasy, or that the Church may fall into such an apostasy. Those who say, that idolatry is not such an apostasy, are not bound to prove that the Church may fall into such an apostasy from fundamental truth, to make good their charge of idolatry. Those who say, that idolatry is such an apostasy, are bound to prove either directly, that the Church is not guilty of idolatry, or by consequence that she cannot be, because she cannot apostatize from fundamental truth : so that the proof lies on their side, not on ours ; we are not bound to prove that the Church may apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness, because we have no occasion to say it may ; but they are bound to prove that the Church cannot so apostatize, because it is the best defence they have against the charge of idolatry.

But I cannot pass on without briefly considering the nature of this argument, to prove that a thing is not, upon a pretence that it cannot be, when there is all other possible evidence to prove that it is ; which is now the modish and popular way of disputing, and the very last refuge of the Church of Rome. If you charge them with errors and corruptions in faith and worship, and prove your charge beyond the possibility of a fair reply, they presently take sanctuary in the indefectibility or infallibility of their Church. Their Church cannot err, because the Council or Pope, or at least both of them together, are infallible : or, as others say, tradition is infallible ; for the Church must believe to-day, as it did yesterday, and to-morrow as it does to-day, and so from one generation to another ; and therefore it is impossible there ever should be any change in the faith of the Church. The Church cannot be guilty of idolatry, because it cannot apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness ; and so in other cases : and therefore the way

they take with the new converts, is not to dispute particular controversies, but instruct them well in this one point, which puts an end to all other disputes, that the Church cannot err, and cannot apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness; and then it is certain, whatever she teaches, she cannot err: and whatever she does, is not apostasy. Now not to shew at present how vainly the Church of Rome challenges to herself the title, privileges, and prerogatives of the Catholic Church, and appropriates all those promises to herself, which were made to the Church in general; nor to examine the meaning of those texts, whereon she founds this pretence of infallibility, I shall only consider, whether this plea, the Church cannot err, therefore she has not erred; the Church cannot apostatize from fundamental truth and holiness, therefore she is not guilty of idolatry; which, say they, is such an apostasy, be sufficient to satisfy any honest inquisitive man, who can read the Scriptures, and compare what the Church now believes and practises, with the doctrines and institutions of our Saviour. For,

1. When such errors and corruptions are notoriously evident, though but in any one instance, to argue that the Church had not erred, because she cannot err, is to dispute against matter of fact, like the philosopher's disputing against the possibility of motion; and no argument whatsoever is good against matter of fact. True, you will say, if it were notoriously evident that the Church has erred, there were an end of her infallibility; but this is matter of dispute, whether she have erred or not, and then if you can prove that she cannot err, you effectually prove that she has not erred. No such matter; for if she be charged with errors, and plain evidence brought, that she has actually erred, unless you can as plainly take off this evidence, it weakens and overthrows all the proofs for infallibility, whatever they are; and therefore the pretence of infallibility is of no use in this dispute, but to cheat the ignorant and unwary; for if I can prove that such doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome are errors and corruptions, till I am satisfied that they are not, I can never believe that Church to be infallible, which I can prove has erred: and therefore while any charge against the errors of the Church of Rome remains unanswered, it is too soon to talk of her infallibility; for actual error is a just confutation of infallibility, but the pretence of infallibility is not a just plea against the charge of actual error; because if I can prove my charge against them, that they have erred, that disproves their infallibility, and then

nothing else can prove it: so that this infallibility can do them no service at all in this dispute, whether they have erred or not; for if I can prove that they have erred, I overthrow all their proofs of infallibility; and whether they have erred or not, is not to be tried by their infallibility, but by the rule of truth and error, which are the holy Scriptures; so absurd it is to think to determine all the controversies now in dispute among us, by the Church's infallibility.

It is indeed a most certain truth, that if the Church be infallible she cannot err, and therefore she has not erred; and it is as certainly true, that if the Church has erred, she can err, and therefore is not infallible. The Romanists assert the first, the Protestants the second; but there is this difference between these two pleas, that if we can make good our charge against them, that they have actually erred, this is a direct and positive proof against their infallibility; but though it be as certainly true that an infallible Church cannot, and has not erred, yet whatever proofs they bring of the Church's infallibility, they are not a direct answer to that charge, That she has actually erred, and can have no force to prove her infallibility, till that charge be answered, because there can be no proof against matter of fact. And therefore when they begin with the proof of infallibility, they begin at the wrong end; for when the Church is charged with error, if they would not lose their labour, they must prove that she has not erred, before they prove her to be infallible; for otherwise, after all the pains they have taken to prove her infallibility, if they cannot deliver her from the charge of having erred, their labour is lost, and therefore it is best to try that first; which shews what a sophistical argument it is to prove that the Church has not erred, because she is infallible and cannot err; for they must first prove that she has not erred, before they can prove her to be infallible; for till this be removed, it is an effectual bar to all other proofs of infallibility. And thus their compendious way of making converts, and confuting heretics, is nothing but sophistry and a cheat; and if men would be sincere and honest converts, they must not flatter themselves with an opinion of the Church's infallibility, but must examine the particular disputes between us, and be thoroughly satisfied that the Church of Rome has not erred, before they embrace her communion.

2. For if it appear, that the Church of Rome has been guilty of error or apostasy, this is a certain demonstration,

that either those Scripture promises which she alleges, do not belong to her, or do not signify what she brings them for ; for whatever Christ promises, he will certainly perform ; and therefore if the Church of Rome has erred, he never promised she should be infallible. To be sure when the sense and application of such texts of Scripture are disputed, as they are between Protestants and Papists, that side must have the advantage, which is confirmed by the event, and matter of fact ; and therefore if it appear the Church of Rome has erred, the Protestant interpretations of those texts, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church," and such like, are to be preferred before the Popish interpretations, which apply them to the bishops of Rome, as the infallible guides of the Church, especially when that evidence we have that the Church has erred, is much more plain and notorious, than that Christ has that she shall not err ; when the Scripture proofs, that the Church of Rome has erred in several doctrines and practices which she now teaches, are much plainer than those texts are, by which they prove that she cannot err ; if I can prove by plain texts that she has erred, this shall teach me how to expound those obscure texts, from which some would prove that she cannot err. Indeed it is very happy that no man believes Christ has promised infallibility to the Church of Rome, but those who believe that she has not erred ; for if they did, it would be a very dangerous sort of temptation, and a very ill argument in the hands of an infidel against Christianity ; for they would rather charge Christ with a breach of his promise, which would destroy his authority, than believe, contrary to the plainest and most convincing evidence, that the Church of Rome has not erred ; and indeed it would stagger the faith of a Christian, if the pretended promises of infallibility to the Church of Rome, were as plain as her errors are ; for what should any man do in that case ? believe that she has not erred, because of the promise of infallibility, or disbelieve the promise, because she has erred ? When both sides are equally plain, and yet can never be reconciled, it is a sore temptation to believe neither, when I know not which to choose, and cannot possibly believe both. So that to urge the infallibility of the Church, that she cannot err, against the plainest evidence that she has erred, may make some men infidels, but can make no considering man a Roman Catholic.

But to return to our author, though I think I have not left him all this time, I gave a fourth answer to his request, which

he takes no notice of, *viz.* “If the first discovery of this defection had been made by laymen, and afterwards acknowledged by the clergy, who joined in the Reformation, I should not have thought the Reformation ever the worse for it. For if the clergy corrupt religion, we have reason to thank God if he opens the eyes of honest and disinterested laymen.” For this is the great grievance, that the clergy should apostatize, and a national laity discover the clergy’s defection and reform it. This is now the fashionable way of disputing against the Reformation of the Church of England, that it was not regularly done by the consent of the major part of the clergy in a national synod, which first ought to have been obtained, before the Queen and the Parliament had made any laws about it; which is the whole design of a late Oxford book* against the Reformation. Now this I confess seems to me a very strange way of reasoning, unworthy of Christians, especially of Christian Divines; for not to enter now into the history of the Reformation, which those who please, may learn from Dr. Burnet, who has published the authentic records of the most material transactions in it, yet I say,

1. If the Reformation be good and necessary, there can want no authority to reform; and my reason is, because it is established by the authority of Christ and his Apostles, which is a good authority to this day; for to reform abuses and corruptions, signifies no more than to profess the pure and uncorrupted faith and worship of Christ; and I desire to know whether Christ have not given sufficient authority to every man to do this? or whether there be any authority in Church or state which can *de jure* forbid the doing of it, and make it unlawful and irregular to do so? If there be, truly Christ and his Apostles have preached the Gospel to very little purpose, if we must not believe or practise as they teach, unless our superiors will give us leave. How could the Gospel have been first planted in the world upon these principles? Jews and Heathens had a regular authority among them to determine matters of religion, and this authority opposed and condemned the faith of Christ; and therefore, unless particular men had reformed for themselves, and joined themselves to the fellowship of the Apostles, they must have continued Jews or Pagans to this day. For as for what our author says, that “such a change in religion ought to have some Scripture, or

* Church Government, part 5, concerning the English Reformation.

because extraordinary, should have miracles to countenance it :” I answer, we have both, we have reformed according to the Scriptures, and can justify our faith and worship by the Scriptures, and a Scripture reformation is confirmed by miracles, because the doctrine of the Gospel is so confirmed ; and we no more want new miracles to confirm our Reformation, than to confirm the authority of the Christian religion ; for reformed Christianity is nothing else but the old primitive Apostolic Christianity ; and therefore we have the same authority to reform now, which the Apostles at first had to preach the Gospel ; for their authority to preach the Gospel is, and will be to the end of the world, a sufficient authority to all men to believe it, and consequently to renounce all errors and corruptions in faith and worship, which are contrary to it.

2. As for the authority of the clergy, whatever it be, it is certain Christ gave them no authority to preach any other Gospel than what he had taught them, which is the express commission which he gave to the Apostles themselves ; and therefore whatever decrees and definitions they have made contrary to the true faith and worship of Christ, are void of themselves, and want no authority to repeal them.

As for that distinction between making and declaring new articles of faith, it is a mere piece of sophistry ; for if they have the power of declaring, and nobody must oppose them, nor judge of their declarations, under the pretence of declaring they may make as many new articles of faith as they please ; as we see the Council of Trent has done : this extravagant authority they give to the clergy, of making decrees and canons concerning faith and worship, which shall oblige the laity to a blind obedience and implicit faith, is a most ridiculous pretence, unless it be supported with infallibility ;* and yet you have already heard, that the pretence of infallibility itself, though it may silence those men’s objections, and stop their farther inquiries who do really believe it, yet it is no defence against the charge of errors, nor a sufficient answer to that charge ; and how vain the pretence itself is, has been abundantly proved in some late treatises.

This is enough to shew how insignificant that charge is against the Reformation, that those bishops and priests who were at that time in power, and were zealously addicted to the interests of Rome, would not concur in it, though afterwards

* See the Authority of Councils, with the Appendix, in Answer to the eight Theses of the Oxford writer, and the Judge of Controversies.

much the greater numbers submitted to it, and thereby gave it an after confirmation, which is as much as they can pretend for the confirmation of some of their General Councils. I grant, nothing can be looked on as the act of the clergy, which is not done by a regular authority, according to the rules of that Church, nor do we pretend that the Reformation was perfected or finished by the regular authority of the Popish clergy, though several of them were zealous in it; but we say it is never the worse for that; if they can prove that what we call a reformation is faulty upon other accounts, then we will grant that to reform against the consent of the clergy did greatly aggravate the crime; but if the Reformation were just and necessary, and a true reformation of the errors and corruptions of Christianity, the dissent of the clergy could not and ought not to hinder it, for they had no such authority from Christ, either to corrupt religion, or to hinder the reformation of it.

3. The supreme authority of any nation has a regular authority to declare what shall be the established religion of that nation; and therefore the Queen and the Parliament could make the Reformed religion the national religion established by law; and this is all that we attribute to Kings and Parliaments. We do not justify our Reformation because it was confirmed by the authority of Parliament, but because it is agreeable to Scripture; but we thank God that he then inclined the heart of the Queen and Parliament to establish the Reformation, and heartily pray that he would still continue it to us and to our posterity for ever. Amen.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT EXAMINED

AND

DISPROVED BY CATHOLIC TRADITION,

IN THE

MAIN POINTS IN CONTROVERSY BETWEEN US AND THE CHURCH OF ROME; WITH A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT OF THE TIMES AND OCCASIONS OF INTRODUCING THEM. TO WHICH A PREFACE IS PREFIXED, CONCERNING THE TRUE SENSE OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT, AND THE NOTION OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

THE PREFACE.

THERE is, it seems, a train in controversies, as well as in thoughts : one thing still giving a start to another ; conferences produce letters, letters, books, and one discourse gives occasion for another. For this follows the former as a necessary pursuit of the same argument against Tradition.

J. Serjeant, in his last letter,* had vouched the authority of the Council of Trent proceeding upon tradition, and he instanced in three points, Transubstantiation, Sacramental Confession, and Extreme Unction. The examination of this I thought fit to reserve for a discourse by itself ; wherein, instead of confining myself to those three particulars, I intend to go through the most material points there established ; and to prove, from the most authentic testimonies, that there was no true Catholic Tradition for any of them. And if I can make good what I have undertaken, I shall make the Council of Trent itself the great instance against the Infallibility of Tradition.

This is a new undertaking : which the impetuosity of our adversaries setting up tradition for the ground of their faith,

* Third Letter, p. 64.

hath brought me to. But besides the shewing that really they have not tradition on their side ; I have endeavoured to trace the several steps, and to set down the times and occasions of introducing those points which have caused that unhappy breach in the Christian world, whose sad effects we daily see and lament : but have little hopes to see remedied, till these new points be discarded, and Scripture, interpreted by truly Catholic tradition, be made the standard of Christian communion.

I do not pretend that all these points came in at one time, or in the same manner ; for some errors and corruptions came in far more early ; some had the favour of the Church of Rome in a higher degree ; some were more generally received in the practice of the Church in later times than others ; and some were merely school points before the Council of Trent, but as far as the Thomists and Scotists could be made to agree there against the Reformers, these passed for articles of faith. For, this was one of the great arts of that Council, to draw up their decrees in such terms, as should leave room enough for eternal wranglings among themselves, provided they agreed in doing the business effectually against the heretics, as they were pleased to call them. I therefore forbear to urge these as points of faith, which have been freely debated among themselves since the Council of Trent, without any censure. We have enough in the plain decrees and canons of that Council, without meddling with any school points. And so I cannot be charged with misrepresenting.

The great debate of late hath been about the true exposition of the points there defined ; and for my part, I am content to yield to any just and reasonable methods of giving the true sense of them. And such I conceive these to be,

I. Where the Council of Trent makes use of words in a strict and limited sense, there it is unreasonable to understand them in a large and improper sense. As for instance, Sess. 6. c. 26. It decrees that justified persons do *vere promerere*, truly merit eternal life ; and Can. 32, “ there is an anathema against him who denies true merit in the good works of justified persons, both as to increase of grace and eternal life.” There is no one conversant in ancient writers, but knows that there was a large and improper sense of the word *merit* ; but how is it possible to apply that sense, where such care is taken that it may be understood in a strict and limited sense ? If the Council had left the word in its general sense, there might

have been reason to have given the fairest interpretation to it : but when it is certainly known, that there had been a difference of opinions in the Church of Rome about true and proper merit, and that which was not (however it were called), and the Council declares for the former, no man of understanding can believe that only the improper sense was meant by it. As in the point of the eucharist, when the Council declares that the words of Christ, "This is my body," are truly and properly to be understood : would it not be thought strange for any one to say, that the Council, notwithstanding, might mean that Christ's words may be figuratively understood ? And we must take the true notion of merit, not from any large expressions of the ancients, but from the conditions of true and proper merit among themselves. But of this at large afterwards. So as to the notion of sacraments ; every one knows how largely that word was taken in ancient writers ; but it would be absurd to understand the Council of Trent in that sense, when Sess. 6. Can. 1, *de Sacramentis*, it denounces an anathema, not merely against him "that denies seven sacraments ;" but against him "that doth not hold every one of them to be truly and properly a sacrament." And in the Creed of Pius IV. one article is, that there are "seven true and proper sacraments." How vain a thing then were it for any to expound these sacraments in a large and improper sense ?

II. Where the Council of Trent hath not declared itself, but it is fully done in the Catechism made by its appointment, we ought to look on that as the true sense of the Council. As in the case of the sacraments ; the Council never declares what it means by true and proper sacraments ; but the Catechism* makes large and full amends for this defect. For after it hath mentioned the use of the word in profane and sacred writers, it sets down the sense of it, according to their divines, "for a sensible sign which conveys the grace which it signifies." And after a large explication of the nature of signs, it gives this description of a true and proper sacrament, "that it is a sensible thing, which by Divine institution, not only hath the force of signifying, but of causing grace." And to shew the authority of this Catechism for explicating the doctrine of the sacraments, we need only to look into Sess. 24. c. 7, *de Reform.* where it is required that the people be instructed in

* Catechism. Rom. Part. 2. [p. 126. Mechlin. 1831.]

the sacraments according to it. It is supposed, that the Catechism was appointed to be made in the eighteenth session at the instigation of Carolus Borromæus (since canonized), but it was not finished while the Council sat, and therefore, Sess. 25, "it was referred to the judgment and authority of the Pope." I confess, therefore, it hath not a Conciliar authority stamped upon it, but it hath a sort of transfused infallibility, as far as they could convey it; and as much as a Council hath, when it borrows it from the Pope's confirmation. It was near two years hammering at Trent, *viz.* from 26th of February 1562, to December 1563, when the Council rose; afterwards, it was preparing at Rome three years longer, and then presented to the Pope to be approved, and published by his authority, after it had been carefully reviewed by Cardinal Sirlet, Borromeo, and others; and hath since been universally received in the Roman Church; so that we can have no more authentic exposition of the sense of the Council of Trent, than what is contained in that Catechism.

III. Where the Council of Trent declares a thing in general to be lawful and due, but doth not express the manner of it, that is to be understood from the generally received and allowed practices at that time. For otherwise, the Council must be charged with great unfaithfulness in not setting down and correcting public and notorious abuses, when it mentioned the things themselves, and some abuses about them. As in the 25th session, concerning purgatory, invocation of saints, worship of images and relics; it goes no farther than "that the sound doctrine be taught, that saints are to be invocated, images and relics to be worshipped;" but never defines what that sound doctrine is, what bounds are to be set in the worship of saints, images and relics, which it is unlawful to exceed. So that in this case, we have no other way to judge of the meaning of the Council, but by comparing the public and allowed practices of the Church with the general decrees of the Council. And we have this farther reason for it, that we are told by the latest expositors of it, that the sense of the Church in speculative points is to be taken from public practices. For, thus one of them expresses himself,* "Moreover, even her speculative doctrines are so mixed with practical ceremonies, which represent them to the vulgar, and instruct even the meanest capacities in the abstrusest doctrines, that it

* Reply to the Defence of the Exposition, &c. p. 134.

seems ever impossible to make an alteration in her doctrine without abrogating her ceremonies, or changing her constant practices."

IV. Where the decrees of the Council are not sufficiently clear, there we must take in the canons to make the sense more plain. This rule I take from the Council itself, which in the sixth session, just before the canons, saith, "that those are added, that all may know not only what they are to hold and follow, but what they are to shun and avoid." As in the famous instance of transubstantiation; suppose that the words of the decree do not determine expressly the *modus*; yet it is impossible for any one to doubt of it who looks into the canon, which denounces an anathema against him,* not only that denies transubstantiation, but that "asserts the substance of bread and wine to remain after consecration." Therefore he that asserts transubstantiation, according to the Council of Trent, must hold it in such a manner, as thereby to understand that the substance of bread and wine doth not remain. Otherwise he is under an anathema by the express canon of the Council.

Therefore it is so far from being a "fatal oversight (as a late author expresses it), to say that the Council of Trent hath determined the *modus* of the real presence," that no man who is not resolved to oversee it, can be of another opinion. And herein the divines of the Church of Rome do agree with us, *viz.* that the particular *modus* is not only determined by the Council, but that it is a matter of faith to all persons of the communion of that Church. As not only appears from the second canon, but from the very decree itself, Sess. 13. ch. 4.

"The holy Synod declares, that by consecration of the bread and wine, there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance [of the body of Christ, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood, which conversion is fitly and properly by the holy Catholic Church called transubstantiation." In which words the Council doth plainly express the *modus* of the real presence to be, not by a presence of Christ's body together with the substance of the bread, as the Lutherans hold, but by a "conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body," &c. And since there were different manners of understanding

* Sess. 13. Can. 2. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 14. p. 808. Lut. Par. 1672.]

this real presence, if the Council did not espouse one so as to reject the other as heretical ; then it is impossible to make the Lutheran doctrine to be declared to be heretical ; *i. e.* unless the Council did determine the *modus* of the real presence. For, if it did not, then, notwithstanding the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent, persons are at liberty to believe either transubstantiation, or consubstantiation, which I think no Roman Catholic will allow.

But it is said, that the meaning of the decree is, “that the real presence is not to be understood after a natural, but a sacramental manner ;” but doth it not plainly tell us, how that sacramental manner is to be understood, *viz.* “by a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the whole substance of the body,” &c. And if other ways be possible, and all others be rejected, then this particular *modus* must be determined.

I grant, that the Council doth not say, there is an annihilation of the elements ; and I know no necessity of using that term, for that which is supposed to be turned into another thing, cannot properly be said to be annihilated (which is the reducing it to nothing), but the Council doth assert “a total conversion of one substance into another,” and where that is, that substance must wholly cease to be what it was ; and so, there can be no substance of the elements remaining after consecration. For, as Aquinas observes, *Quod convertitur in aliquid, factâ conversione non manet*.* If then the substance of the elements doth not remain after consecration, by virtue of this total conversion, then the Council of Trent, by its decree, hath plainly determined the *modus* of the real presence, so as to exclude any such manner as doth suppose the substance to remain, whether it be by impanation or consubstantiation, or any other way.

What if Rupertus “thought the bread might become the real body of Christ, by a union of the Word to it ?” All that can be inferred is, that the *modus* was not then so determined as to oblige all persons to hold it. But what is this to the Council of Trent ? Can any one hold the substance to remain, and not to remain at the same time ? For he that holds with Rupertus, must allow the substance to remain ; he that believes a total conversion, must deny it. And he that can believe both these at once, may believe what he pleases.

* 3 Q. 75. A. 2. [vol. 24. p. 290. col. 2. Venet. 1787.]

“But the Council only declares the sacramental presence to be after an ineffable manner.” I say, it determines it to be by a total conversion of one substance into another; which may well be said to be ineffable, since what cannot be understood, can never be expressed.

Our dispute is not about the use of the word transubstantiation, for I think it proper enough to express the sense of the Council of Trent; but as the word consubstantial did exclude all other modes how Christ might be the Son of God, and determined the faith of the Church to that manner; so doth the sense of transubstantiation, as determined by the Council of Trent, limit the manner of the real presence to such a conversion of the substance of the elements into the substance of Christ's body and blood, as doth imply no substance to remain after consecration.

It is to no purpose to tell us, “the Council uses only the word species, and not accidents;” for whatever they are called, the Council denounces its anathema against those “who hold the substance to remain after consecration; and denies the total conversion of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ.” If the substance be not there, the *modus* is to purpose determined. And whatever remains, call it what you will, it is not the substance; and that is sufficient to shew, that the Council of Trent hath clearly determined the *modus* of the real presence.

V. We must distinguish the school points left undetermined by the Council of Trent, from those which are made articles of faith. We never pretend, that it left no school disputes about the points there determined; but we say it went too far in making some school points to be points of faith, when it had been more for the peace of Christendom, to have left them to the schools still. Thus in the point of transubstantiation, the elder Schoolmen tell us, there were different ways of explaining the real presence; and that those which supposed the substance to remain, were more agreeable to reason and Scripture than the other; and some were of opinion, that the *modus* was no matter of faith then. But after the point of the real presence came to be warmly contested in the time of Berengarius, it rose by degrees higher and higher, till at last the particular *modus* came to be determined with an anathema by the Council of Trent.

When Berengarius, A.D. 1059, was forced to recant by Nicholas II. with the assistance of 113 bishops; no more

was required of him, "than to hold that the bread and wine after consecration, are not only the sacrament, but the true body and blood of Christ, and that it is sensibly handled and broke by the priest's hands, and eaten by the communicants." Here is no denying the substance of bread to remain; and Joh. Parisiensis observes, that the words cannot be defended but by an assumption of the bread; for, saith he, "if the body of Christ be truly and sensibly handled and eaten, this cannot be understood of Christ's glorious body in heaven, but it must be of the bread really made the body of Christ after consecration."

The sense which the Canonists put upon the words of this recantation is absurd, *viz.* "that they are to be understood of the species;" for Berengarius's opinion related to the substance of Christ's body, which he denied to be in the sacrament. And what would it have signified for him to have said, "That Christ was sensibly broken, and eaten under the species of bread and wine?" *i.e.* that his body was not sensibly broken and eaten, but the species were. It had signified something, if he had said, "there was no substance of bread and wine left, but only the species." But all the design of this recantation was to make him assert the "sacrament to be made the true and real body of Christ," in as strong a manner as the Pope and his brethren could think of. And although the Canonists think, if strictly taken, it implies greater heresy than that of Berengarius; yet, by their favour, this form was only thought fit to be put into the canon law, as the standard of the faith of the Roman Church then; and the following abjuration of Berengarius, was only kept in the register of Gregory VIIth's epistles.

For about twenty years after, by order of Gregory VII., Berengarius was brought to another abjuration, but by no means after the same form with the former. For by this he was required to declare, "that the bread and wine are substantially converted into the true and proper flesh and blood of Christ, and after consecration are the true body of Christ, born of the Virgin, and sacrificed upon the cross, and that sits at the right hand of the Father; and the true blood of Christ, which was shed out of his side, not only as a sacramental sign, but in propriety of nature and reality of substance."

This was indeed a pretty bold assertion of the substantial presence. And so much the bolder, if the commentary on St. Matthew be Hildebrand's. For there he saith, "the

manner of the conversion is uncertain." But as far as I can judge, by substantial conversion he did not then mean as the Council of Trent doth, a total conversion of one substance into another, so as that nothing of the former substance remains; but that there was a change by consecration, not by making the body of Christ of the substance of the bread, but by its passing into that body of Christ which was born of the Virgin. For, upon comparing the two forms, there we shall find lies the main difference. Pope Nicholas went no farther than to the true body of Christ; which it might be as well by assumption, as conversion; Gregory VII. went farther, and thought it necessary to add, that the change was into the substance of that body which was born of the Virgin, &c. And so this second form excludes a true body merely by assumption, and asserts the change to be into the substance of Christ's body in heaven; but it doth not determine, that nothing of the substance of the elements doth remain. For when he puts that kind of substantial conversion which leaves nothing but the accidents, and the body of Christ to be under them, which belonged to the substance of the elements; he declares this matter to be uncertain. Which shews, that however a change was owned into the substance of Christ's body, yet such a total conversion, as is determined by the Council of Trent, was not then made an article of faith.

But from this supposition made by Hildebrand, it appears, that the doctrine of substance and accidents was then well known; and therefore the introducing Aristotle's Philosophy from the Arabians afterwards, could make no alteration in this matter. For the words of Hildebrand are as plain as to the difference of substance and accidents, as of any of the Schoolmen; and that the accidents of the bread and wine might be separated from the substance of them; but this was not then made a matter of faith, as it was afterwards.

But the case was remarkably altered, after the Lateran Council, under Innocent III. For transubstantiation being admitted there among the articles of faith; and so entered in the canon law in the very beginning of the Decretals; this did not merely become a School term, but by the inquisitors of that time it was accounted heresy to deny it. It may be sufficiently proved by the Schoolmen and Canonists, that a difference of opinions, as to the *modus*, did still continue (but that belongs to a more proper place), and Joh. Parisiensis declares (p. 103), "that the Lateran Council, in his opinion,

did not make transubstantiation a point of faith ; or at least that substance was not to be taken for the matter, but the *suppositum* ;” but the inquisitors went more briskly to work, and made it downright heresy to assert, “ that the substance of the elements did remain after consecration.”

Of this, we have full evidence in the register of Courtney, archbishop of Canterbury (which is no invisible manuscript). For there we read, fol. 25, that he called a select convocation of bishops, divines and canonists, May 17, A.D. 1382, to declare some propositions to be heretical, and some to be erroneous and contrary to the determination of the Church. Among the first, these two are set down in the first place,

“ 1. That the material substance of the bread and wine doth remain in the sacrament of the altar, after consecration.”

“ 2. That the accidents do not remain without their subject in that sacrament after consecration.”

After this, the Archbishop sent forth his mandate to all his suffragans, not only to prohibit the preaching of that doctrine, but to inquire after those who preached it. And June 12, Robert Rygge, chancellor of Oxford, and Thomas Brightwell, appeared before him, and were examined upon these propositions ; which they declared to be heretical : who thereupon required the publication of them as such in the University ; and the proceeding against those who were suspected to favour them.

The ground the Archbishop went upon, was, that these had been already condemned by the Church, and therefore *ex abundanti*, they declared them to be so condemned ; as appears by the monition given to Robert Rygge himself, as too much suspected to favour the contrary doctrine ; as well as Nicholas Hereford, Philip Reppynndon, D.D., and John Ashton, B.D.

Against these, the Archbishop proceeded as *Inquisitor Hæreticæ Pravitatis per totam suam Provinciam*, as it is in the record ; who appearing, desired a copy of the several propositions, and then they were required to give in their judgment upon them. Ashton refused, but the others promised, which they performed soon after ; and to these two propositions, their answers were,

“ To the first, that as far as it was contrary to the decretal, *Firmiter Credimus*, it was heresy.”

To the second, “ that as far as it was contrary to the decretal *Cum Marthæ*, it was heresy.”

These answers were judged insufficient, because they did not declare what that sense was. And the Archbishop put this question to them, "Whether the same numerical material bread, which before consecration was set upon the altar, did remain in its proper substance and nature after consecration," but they would give no other answer at that time. But afterwards Reppyndon abjured, and was made Bishop of Lincoln.

From hence it appears, that it was then thought that the *modus* was so far determined by the Lateran Council, that the contrary doctrine was declared not merely erroneous in faith, but heretical.

In the first convocation held by Th. Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1396,* a complaint was brought, that several divines, and others of the University of Oxford, held some heretical and erroneous opinions; the first whereof was,

"That the substance of bread doth remain after consecration; and doth not cease to be bread;" which is there affirmed to be heresy, speaking of material bread.

The second, "that the court of Rome, in the Can. *Ego Berengarius*, had determined that the sacrament of the eucharist is naturally true bread."

It is very hard to say, how this came to be then accounted heretical doctrine, when no less a man than Durandus in the same age affirms, "that the Canonists grant that the opinion of the ceasing of the substance was grounded on the Can. *Firmiter Credimus*, i.e. on the Lateran Council; but that of the remaining of the substance on that, *Ego Berengarius*." But however, it passed for heretical, or at least very erroneous doctrine here; but the main heresy was to hold that the substance remained.

For A.D. 1400, (as appears by the Register, p. 2, f. 179), William Sawtre, *alias* Chatris, a parochial priest in London, was summoned before the same Archbishop in convocation, upon an information of heresy; and one of the main articles against him was, that he held the substance of the bread to remain in the sacrament of the altar after consecration; and that it doth not cease to be bread. Sawtre answered, that he believed, "that after consecration, the bread did remain with the body of Christ; but it doth not cease to be simply bread, but it remains holy and true the bread of life and body of Christ." The Archbishop examined him chiefly upon this

* Regist. f. 47.

article ; and because he did not answer home to the point, he was condemned for a heretic, and was the first who was burned for heresy in England. And yet his answer was, "that he could not understand the matter ;" then the Archbishop asked him, "if he would stand to the Church's determination ;" he said, "he would so far as it was not contrary to the will of God." Upon which he was declared an heretic, and delivered over to the secular power.

In the same convocation, John Pervey made an abjuration of heresy, and the first he renounced was, "that after consecration in the sacrament of the altar, there neither is, nor can be an accident without a subject, and that the same substance and nature of bread remained, which was before."

In the examination of William Thorp by Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1407 (which is not in the Register, being defective, but the account is preserved from his own copy), the Archbishop declared, "that the Church had now determined, that there abideth no substance of bread after consecration in the sacrament of the altar. And that if he believed otherwise, he did not believe as the Church believed." Thorp quoted St. Augustine and Fulgentius, to prove that the substance remained ; and the very mass on Christmas-Day. The Archbishop still pressed him with the Church's determination. Thorp said, "this was a School nicety, whether accidents could be without a subject." No, said the Archbishop, "it is the faith of the Church I go upon." Thorp replied, "it was not so for a thousand years after Christ."

In the examination of the Lord Cobham, A.D. 1412, by the same Archbishop, we find that he owned the real presence of Christ's body as firmly as his accusers ;* but he was condemned for heresy, because he held the substance of bread to remain. For the Archbishop declared this to be the sense of the Church ; "that after consecration, remaineth no material bread or wine which were before, they being turned into Christ's very body and blood." The original words of the Archbishop, as they are in the Register, are these :

"The faith and the determination of holy Church, touching the blestfull sacrament of the auter, is this, that after the sacramental words ben said by a prest in his masse, the material bred that was before, is turned into Christ's veray body. And the material wyn that was before, is turned into

* Regist. Arundel. p. 2. f. 143.

Christ's veray blode, and so there leweth in the auter, no material brede ne material wyn, the wiche wer ther byfore the saying of the sacramental words."

And the bishops afterwards stood up and said; "it is manifest heresy to say, that it is bread after the sacramental words be spoken; because it was against the determination of holy Church."

But to make all sure, not many years after, May 4, A.D. 1415, the Council of Constance, session 8, declared the two propositions before mentioned to be heretical; *viz.* "to hold that the substance doth remain after consecration, and that the accidents do not remain without a subject."

Let any impartial reader now judge, whether it be any fatal oversight to assert, that the *modus* of the real presence was determined by the Council of Trent, when there were so many leading determinations to it, which were generally owned and received in the Church of Rome. But there were other disputes remaining in the Schools relating to this matter; which we do not pretend were ever determined by the Council of Trent. As,

(1.) Whether the words of consecration are to be understood in a speculative or practical sense? For, the Scotists say, in the former sense, they do by no means prove transubstantiation; since it may be truly said, "This is my body," though the substance of bread do remain; and that they are to be understood in a practical sense, *i.e.* for converting the bread into the body, is not to be deduced *ex vi verborum*, from the mere force of the words, but from the sense of the Church, which hath so understood them. Which in plain terms is to say, it cannot be proved from Scripture, but from the sense of the Church; and so Scotus doth acknowledge, but then he adds, "that we are to judge this to be the sense of Scripture, because the Church hath declared it. Which he doth not think was done before the Council of Lateran." So that this Council must be believed to have had as infallible a spirit in giving this sense of Scripture, as there was in the writing of it; since it is not drawn from the words, but added to them. On the other side, the Thomists insist on the force of the words themselves; for if, they say, from the words be inferred that there is a real presence of the substance of Christ's body, then it follows thence, that there is no substance of the bread remaining; for a substance cannot be where it was not before, but it must either change its place, or another must be turned into it; as

fire in a house must either be brought hither, or some other thing must be turned into fire; but, say they, the body of Christ cannot be brought from heaven thither, for then it must leave the place it had there; and must pass through all the bodies between; and it is impossible for the same body to be locally present in several places; and therefore the body of Christ cannot otherwise be really and substantially present, but by the conversion of the substance of the bread into it.

(2.) In what manner the body of Christ is made to be present in the sacrament? The Scotists say, it is impossible to conceive it otherwise than by bringing it from the place where it already is; the Thomists say that it is impossible, since that body must be divided from itself by so many other bodies interposing. The former is said to be an adductive conversion, the latter a productive; but then here lies another difficulty, how there can be a productive conversion of a thing already in being. But my business is not to give an account of these School disputes; but to shew how different they were from the point of transubstantiation; and that both these disputing parties did agree, that the *modus* of the real presence was defined to be, by changing the substance of the elements into the body and blood of Christ; but they still warmly disputed about the *modus* of that *modus*; viz. how a body already in being could be present in so many places, without leaving that place where it was already. And no man who hath ever looked into these School disputes, can ever imagine that they disputed about the truth of the doctrine of transubstantiation, but only about the manner of explaining it. Wherein they do effectually overthrow each other's notions, without being able to establish their own; as the Elector of Cologne truly observed of their debates about this matter in the Council of Trent.

VI. Where the sense of words hath been changed by the introducing new doctrines, there the words ought to be understood according to the doctrine at that time received. Of this we have two remarkable instances in the Council of Trent:

The first is about indulgences, which that Council, in its last session, never went about to define: but made use of the old word, and so declares both Scripture and antiquity for the use of them. But there had been a mighty change in the doctrine about them, since the word was used in the Christian Church, no doubt there was a power in the Church to relax canonical penances in extraordinary cases; but what could

that signify when the canonical discipline was laid aside, and a new method of dealing with penitents was taken up, and another trade driven with respect to purgatory pains? For here was a new thing carried on under an old name. And that hath been the great artifice of the Roman Church; where it hath evidently gone off from the old doctrines, yet to retain the old names, that the unwary might still think the things were the same, because the names were. As in the present case, we deny not the use of indulgences in the Primitive Church; as the word was used for relaxations of the canonical discipline; but we utterly deny it as to the pains of purgatory. And that this was the sense then received in the Church of Rome, appears from the Papal Constitutions of Boniface VIII., Clemens VI., and Leo X. But of these, more hereafter.

The other instance is in the word *species*, used by the Council of Trent, sess. 3. can. 2, where “an anathema is denounced against him that denies the conversion of the whole substance of the elements into the body and blood of Christ, the species of bread and wine only remaining.”

Now a controversy hath been started in the Church of Rome, what is to be understood by species, whether real accidents, or only appearances.

Some of the Church of Rome, who have had a taste of the new philosophy, reject any real accidents, and yet declare transubstantiation to be a matter of faith, and go about to explain the notion of it in another manner. Among these, one Emanuel Maignan,* a professor of divinity at Toulouse, hath at large undertaken this matter. The methods he takes is this:

(1.) He grants, that nothing remains of the bread after consecration, but that whereby it was an object of sense; because that which is really the being of one thing, cannot be the being of another. And he confesses that the *modus*, as to the not being of the substance after consecration, is determined by the Councils of Constance and Trent.

(2.) He asserts, that real accidents, supposing them separable from the substance, are not that whereby the elements are made the objects of sense; because they do not make the conjunction between the object and the faculty.

(3.) Since he denies that accidents have any real being distinct from the substance they are in, he grants, that it is as

* Maignan *Philosophia Sacra*. Part. 2. Append. 5.

much a matter of faith, that there are no real accidents after consecration, as that there is no real substance; and he brings the authorities of the Councils of Lateran, Florence, and Trent to prove it.

(4.) As the substance did by Divine concurrence so act upon the senses before, as to make it be an object of sense; so after consecration, God, by his immediate act, makes the same appearances, although the substance be gone. And this, he saith, is the effect of this miraculous conversion, which is concealed from our senses, by God's immediate causing the very same appearances, which came before from the substance. Which appearances, he saith, are the species mentioned by the Council of Trent, and other elder Councils and Fathers.

Against this new hypothesis, a famous Jesuit, Theophilus Raynaudus, opposed himself with great vehemency; and urged these arguments against it:

(1.) That it overthrows the very nature of a sacrament, leaving no external visible sign; but a perpetual illusion of the senses, in such a manner, that the error of one cannot be corrected by another.

(2.) That it overthrows the design of the sacrament, which is to be true and proper food, "My flesh is meat indeed," &c. John vi. Which, he saith, is to be understood of the sacrament, as well as of the body of Christ, and therefore cannot agree with an imaginary appearance.

(3.) It is not consistent with the accidents which befall the sacramental species, as "to be trod under foot, to be cast into indecent places, to be devoured by brutes, to be putrified," &c. If the body of Christ withdraws, there must be something beyond mere appearances.

(4.) He makes this doctrine to be heretical, because the Council of Constance condemned it as an heretical proposition, to affirm, "that in the eucharist, accidents do not remain without their subject;" and because the Council of Trent uses the word *species* in the sense then generally received, and so it signified the same with accidents. Which, saith he, farther appears, because the Council speaks of the species remaining; but if there be no real accidents, the species doth not remain in the object; but a new appearance is produced. And it seems most reasonable to interpret the language of the Council according to the general sense wherein the words were understood at that time.

VII. What things were disputed and opposed by some in

the Council, without being censured for it, although they were afterwards decreed by a major party, yet cannot be said to have been there received by a catholic tradition. Because matters of faith, which have been universally received in the Church, can never be supposed to be contested in a Council without censure ; but if it appears that there were heats and warm debates among the parties in the Council itself, and both think they speak the sense of the catholic Church ; then we must either allow that there was then no known catholic traditions about those matters, or that the divines of the Church of Rome, assembled in Council, did not understand what it was. And what happens to be decreed by a majority, can never be concluded from thence to have been the tradition before, because there was a different sense of others concerning it. And since in a division, a single person may make a majority, it will be very hard to believe, that he carries infallibility and catholic tradition along with him.

But I think it reasonable in the inquiry after catholic tradition, to take notice of the different opinions in the Council ; and among the Schoolmen before it ; and not only to observe, what was the sense of the Roman Church, but of the Eastern Churches too ; and where the matter requires it, to go through the several ages of the Church, up to the Apostolical times : that I may effectually prove, that in the main points in controversy between us, which are established by the Council of Trent, there cannot be produced any Catholic and Apostolical Tradition for them.

THERE are two things designed by me in this treatise :

1. To shew that there is no such thing as universal tradition for the main points in controversy between us and the Church of Rome, as they are determined by the Council of Trent.

2. To give an account by what steps and degrees, and on what occasions those doctrines and practices came into the Church.

But before I come to particulars, I shall lay down some reasonable *postulata*.

1. That a Catholic Tradition must be universally received among the sound members of the Catholic Church.

2. That the force of Tradition lies in the certainty of conveyance of matters of faith from the Apostolical times. For

no new doctrines being pretended to, there can be no matter of faith in any age of the Church, but what was so in the precedent, and so up to the Apostles' times.

3. That it is impossible to suppose the divines of the Catholic Church to be ignorant, what was in their own time received for Catholic Tradition. For, if it be so hard for others to mistake it, it will be much more so for those whose business is to inquire into, and to deliver matters of faith.

These things premised, I now enter upon the points themselves ; and I begin with,

I. Traditions being a rule of faith equal with Scriptures.

This is declared by the Council of Trent, as the groundwork of their proceedings.

The words are, Sess. 4, "That the Council receives traditions, both as to faith and manners,* either delivered by Christ himself with his own mouth, or dictated by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continual succession, with equal piety of affection and reverence, as the proofs of holy Scripture."

Where the Council first supposes there are such traditions from Christ and the Holy Ghost, distinct from Scripture, which relate to faith ; and then it declares equal respect and veneration due to them. No one questions but the word of Christ, and dictates of the Holy Ghost, deserve equal respect, howsoever conveyed to us ; but the point is, whether there was a catholic tradition before this time for an unwritten word, as a foundation of faith, together with the written word.

1. It is therefore impertinent here to talk of a tradition before the written word ; for our debate is concerning both being joined together to make a perfect rule of faith : and yet this is one of the common pleas on behalf of tradition.

2. It is likewise impertinent to talk of that tradition, whereby we do receive the written word. For the Council first supposes the written word to be received and embraced as the Word of God, before it mentions the unwritten word ; and therefore it cannot be understood concerning that tradition whereby we receive the Scriptures. And the Council affirms, "that the truth of the Gospel is contained partly in books that are written, and partly in unwritten traditions." By the

* *Necnon traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem tum ad mores pertinentes, tanquam vel ore tenus à Christo vel à Spiritu sancto dictatas, et continuâ successione in Ecclesia Catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu ac reverentiâ suscipit et veneratur.* [Labbe, Concil. ut supra, p. 746.]

truth of the Scriptures they cannot mean the Scriptures being the word of God, but that the word was contained partly in Scripture, and partly in tradition ; and it is therefore impertinent to urge the tradition for Scripture to prove tradition to be part of the rule of faith, as it is here owned by the Council of Trent.

3. The Council doth not here speak of a traditionary sense of Scripture, but of a distinct rule of faith from the Scripture. For of that it speaks afterwards in the decree about the use of Scripture ; where it saith, “No man ought to interpret Scripture against the sense of the Church, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and meaning of Scripture, nor against the unanimous consent of the Fathers.” Whereby it is evident, the Council is not to be understood of any consequences drawn out of Scripture concerning things not expressly contained in it ; but it clearly means an unwritten word distinct from the written, and not contained in it ; which, together with that, makes up a complete rule of faith. This being the true sense of the Council, I shall now shew that there was no catholic tradition for it.

Which I shall prove by these steps :

1. From the proceedings of the Council itself.

2. From the testimony of the divines of that Church before the Council for several centuries.

3. From the canon law received and allowed in the Church of Rome.

4. From the ancient offices used in that Church.

5. From the testimony of the Fathers.

1. From the proceedings of the Council about this matter.

By the *postulata* it appears, that a catholic tradition is such as must be known by the sound members of the Church, and especially of the divines in it. But it appears by the most allowed histories of that Council, this rule of faith was not so received there. For Cardinal Pallavicini tells us, that it was warmly debated, and canvassed even by the bishops themselves. The Bishop of Fano (Bertanus) urged against it,* that “God had not given equal firmness to tradition as he had done to Scripture, since several traditions had failed.” But the Bishop of Bitonto (Mussus) opposed him, and said, “though all truths were not to be equally regarded, yet every word of God ought, and traditions, as well as Scripture, were

* Hist. Concil. Trident. l. 6. c. 14. n. 3. [vol. 1. p. 588. Antv. 1670.]

the word of God, and the first principles of faith ;” and the greater part of the Council followed him. It seems, then, there was a division in the Council about it ; but how could that be, if there were a catholic tradition about this rule of faith ? Could the bishops of the catholic Church, when assembled in Council to determine matters of faith, be no better agreed about the rule of faith ; and yet must we believe there was at that time a known catholic tradition about it, and that it was impossible they should err about such a tradition ? Nay, farther, the same author tells us, that although this Bishop had gained the greatest part of the Council to him, yet his own heart misgave him, and in the next congregation himself proposed, that instead of *equal*, it might be put a *like veneration* ; and yet we must believe there was a catholic tradition for an equal veneration to Scripture and tradition. But the Bishop of Chioza (Naclantus), he saith, “ inveighed more bitterly against this equality, and in the face of the Council charged the doctrine with impiety ;” * and he would not allow any Divine inspiration to tradition, but that they were to be considered only as laws of the Church. It is true, he saith, he professed to consent to the decree afterwards, but withal, he tells us, that he was brought under the inquisition not long after, upon suspicion of heresy ; which shews they were not well satisfied with his submission. We are extremely beholden to Cardinal Pallavicini for his information in these matters, which are passed over too jejune by F. Paul.

2. I proceed to the testimony of the divines of the Roman Church before the Council of Trent. It is observed by some of them, that when the Fathers appealed to the tradition of the Church in any controverted point of faith, they made their appeal to those who wrote before the controversy was started ; as St. Augustine † did against the Pelagians, &c. This is a reasonable method of proceeding, in case tradition be a rule of faith : and therefore must be so even in this point, whether tradition be such a rule or not. For the divines who wrote before, could not be ignorant of the rule of faith they received among themselves.

Gabriel Biel lived in the latter end of the fifteenth century, and he affirms, ‡ “ that the Scripture alone teaches all things

* N. 4. [Ibid. p. 589.]

† Aug. l. 2. c. Julian.

‡ Et cætera nostræ saluti necessaria, quæ omnia sola docet sacra Scriptura. Lection. in Canon. Missæ 71. [fol. cxlvi. p. 1. col. 2. Lugd. 1511.]

necessary to salvation ;” and he instances “in the things to be done and to be avoided, to be loved and to be despised, to be believed, and to be hoped for.” And again :* “That the will of God is to be understood by the Scriptures, and by them alone we know the whole will of God.” If the whole will of God were to be known by the Scripture, how could part of it be preserved in an unwritten tradition? And if this were then part of the rule of faith, how could such a man, who was Professor of Divinity at Tubing, be ignorant of it? I know he saith he took the main of his book from the lectures of Eggelingus, in the cathedral church at Mentz ; but this adds greater strength to the argument, since it appears hereby, that this doctrine was not confined to the Schools, but openly delivered in one of the most famous churches in Germany.

Cajetan died not above twelve years before the Council, who agrees with this doctrine of Biel or Eggelingus (and he was accounted the oracle of his time for divinity), for he affirms,† “that the Scripture gives such a perfection to a man of God (or one that devoutly serves him), that hereby he is accomplished for every good work.” How can this be, if there be another rule of faith quite distinct from the written word?

Bellarmino indeed grants,‡ “that all things which are simply necessary to the salvation of all, are plainly contained in Scripture,” by which he yields, “that the Scripture alone is the rule of faith as to necessary points ;” and he calls the Scripture,§ “the certain and stable rule of faith, yea,|| the most certain, and most secure rule.”¶ If there be then any other, it must be less certain, and about points not necessary to salvation ; *i. e.* it must be a rule where there is no need of

* Hæc autem in sacris Scripturis discuntur, per quas solas plenam intelligere possumus Dei voluntatem. *ib.*

† Ecce quo tendit utilitas divinæ Scripturæ ad perfectionem hominis Dei (hoc est, qui totum seipsum Deo dat), perfectionem inquam talem ut sit perfectus ad omne bonum exercendum. In 2. ad Tim. iii. 16.

‡ Dico illa omnia Scripta esse ab Apostolis quæ sunt omnibus necessaria, et quæ ipsi palam omnibus vulgo prædicaverunt. Bellarm. de Verbo Dei, l. 4. c. 11. [vol. 1. p. 124. col. 1. Prag. 1721.]

§ Illud imprimis statuendum erit, Propheticos et Apostolicos libros juxta mentem Ecclesiæ Catholicæ verum esse verbum Dei, et certam ac stabilem Regulam fidei. *Id.* l. 1. c. 1. [Ibid. p. 1. col. 2.]

|| At sacris Scripturis quæ Prophetis et Apostolis literis continentur, nihil est notius, nihil certius. *Id.* c. 2. [Ibid. p. 2. col. 2.]

¶ Quare cum sacra Scriptura regula credendi certissima tutissimaque sit. [Ibid. p. 3. col. 1.]

a rule. For if men's salvation be sufficiently provided for by the written rule, and the Divine revelation be in order to men's salvation, what need any other revelation to the Church, besides what is written?

He asserts farther,* "that nothing is *de fide*, but what God hath revealed to the Prophets and Apostles, or is deduced from thence." This he brings to prove, "that whatsoever was received as a matter of faith in the Church, which is not found in Scripture, must have come from an Apostolical tradition." But if it be necessary to salvation, according to his own concession, it must be written; and if it be not, how comes it to be received as a matter of faith? unless it be first proved, that it is necessary to salvation to receive an unwritten rule of faith, as well as a written: for, either it must be necessary on its own account, and then he saith it must be written; and if not, then it can be no otherwise necessary than because it is to be believed on the account of a rule, which makes it necessary. And consequently that rule must be first proved to be a necessary article of faith: which Bellarmine hath nowhere done; but only sets down rules about knowing true Apostolical traditions from others in matters of faith, wherein he wisely supposes that which he was to prove.

And the true occasion of setting up this new rule of faith, is intimated by Bellarmine himself, in his first rule of judging true Apostolical traditions. Which is, "when the Church believes any thing as a doctrine of faith, which is not in Scripture, then," saith he, "we must judge it to be an Apostolical tradition." Why so? "Otherwise the Church must have erred in taking that for a matter of faith which was not." And this is the great secret about this new rule of faith; they saw plainly several things were imposed on the faith of Christians, which could not be proved from Scripture; and they must not yield they had once mistaken, and therefore this new, additional, less certain rule for unnecessary points must be advanced, although they wanted tradition among themselves to prove tradition a rule of faith; which I shall now farther make appear, from their own School divines, before the Council of Trent.

We are to observe among them, what those are which they strictly call theological truths, and by them we shall judge, what they made the rule of faith. For they do not make a

* L. 4. c. 9. [Ibid. p. 118. col. 1.]

bare revelation to any person a sufficient ground for faith ; but they say,* “the revelation must be public, and designed for the general benefit of the Church ;” and so Aquinas determines,† “that our faith rests only upon the revelations made to the Prophets and Apostles ; and theological truths are such as are immediately deduced from the principles of faith,” *i. e.* from public Divine revelations, owned and received by the Church. The modern Schoolmen,‡ who follow the Council of Trent, make “theological truths to be deduced from the unwritten, as well as the written word ;” or else they would not speak consonantly to their own doctrine. And therefore, if those before them deduce theological truths only from the written word, then it will follow, that they did not hold the unwritten word to be a rule of faith.

Marsilius ab Inghen§ was first Professor of Divinity at Heidelberg (at the latter end of the fifteenth century, saith Bellarmine, but Trithemius saith the fourteenth), and he determines, “that a theological proposition is that which is positively asserted in Scripture, or deduced from thence by good consequence ; and that a theological truth, strictly taken, is the truth of an article of faith, or something express in the Bible, or deduced from thence.” He mentions Apostolical traditions afterwards, and joins them with ecclesiastical histories and martyrologies. So far was he from supposing them to be part of the rule of faith.

In the beginning of the fifteenth centry, lived Petrus de Alliaco,|| one as famous for his skill in divinity, as for his dignity in the Church : he saith, “that theological discourse is founded on Scripture, and a theological proof must be drawn from thence ; that theological principles are the truths contained in the canon of Scripture ; and conclusions are such as are drawn out of what is contained in Scripture.” So that he not only makes the Scripture the foundation of faith, but of all sorts of true reasoning about it. He knew nothing of Cardinal Pallavicini’s two first principles of faith.

* Et quantum ad ea quæ proponuntur omnibus credenda, quæ pertinent ad fidem. 2. 2. q. 171. prol. [vol. 23. p. 234. col. 1. Venet. 1787.]

† 1. q. 1. a. 5. [Ibid. vol. 20. p. 4. col. 1.]

‡ Melch. Can. l. 12. c. 3. [p. 566. Colon. Agr. 1605.]

§ Marsil. in. 4. lib. Sentent. l. 1. Procem. q. 2. art. 2. [fol. 11. p. 2. col. 1, 2. Argent. 1501.]

|| Pet. de Alliaco in Sent. l. 1. q. 1. a. 3. [fol. xlix. p. 2. col. 2. Par. sine Anno.]

To the same purpose speaks Gregorius Ariminensis,* about the middle of the fourteenth century ; he saith, “all theological discourse is grounded on Scripture, and the consequences from it;” which he not only proves from testimony, but *ex communi omnium conceptione*, from the general consent of Christians. For, saith he, “all are agreed, that then a thing is proved theologically, when it is proved from the words of Scripture.” So that here we have plain tradition, against traditions being a distinct rule of faith, and this delivered by the general of an order in the Church of Rome. He affirms, that the principles of theology are no other than the truths contained in the canon of Scripture ; and that the resolution of all theological discourse is into them: and that there can be no theological conclusion, but what is drawn from Scripture.

In the former part of that century lived Durandus,* he gives a threefold sense of theology. “1. For a habit whereby we assent to those things which are contained in Scripture, as they are there delivered. 2. For a habit whereby those things are defended and declared, which are delivered in Scripture.† 3. For a habit of those things which are deduced out of articles of faith ; and so it is all one with the holy Scripture.”‡

And in another place he affirms, “that all truth is contained in the holy Scripture at large;|| but for the people’s conveniency, the necessary points are summed up in the Apostles’ Creed.”

In his preface before his book on the Sentences, he highly commends “the Scriptures for their dignity, their usefulness, their certainty, their depth ;” and after all, concludes, “that in matters of faith, men ought to speak agreeably to the Scriptures ; and whosoever doth not, breaks the rule of the Scriptures,” which he calls “the measure of our faith.” What tradition did appear then for another rule of faith in the fourteenth century ?

But before I proceed higher, I shall shew the consent of others with these school divines in the last three centuries before the Council of Trent. In the middle of the fifteenth, lived Nicolaus Panormitanus, one of mighty reputation for his skill in the Canon Law. In the chapter *Significasti primo. 1. de Electione*, debating the authority of Pope and Council, he

* Greg. Arimin. q. 1. a. 2.

† Durand. prol. q. 5. n. 9. [fol. ii. p. 2. col. 1. Par. 1508.]

‡ A. 13. [Ibid.]

§ N. 21. [Ibid. col. 2.]

|| L. 3. Dist. 25. q. 2. [Ibid. fol. ccxciii. p. 1. col. 1.]

saith,* “if the Pope hath better reason, his authority is greater than the Council’s; and if any private person in matters of faith, hath better reason out of Scripture than the Pope, his saying is to be preferred above the Pope’s.” Which words do plainly shew, that the Scripture was then looked on as the only rule of faith; or else no man’s grounding himself on Scripture, could make his doctrine to be preferred before the Pope’s; who might allege tradition against him, and if that were an equal rule of faith, the doctrine of one rule could not be preferred before the other.

At the same time lived Tostatus, the famous bishop of Avila, one of infinite industry and great judgment, and therefore could not be mistaken in the rule of faith. In his preface on Genesis, he saith,† “that there must be a rule for our understandings to be regulated by, and that rule must be most certain: that Divine faith is the most certain, and that is contained in Scripture, and therefore we must regulate our understandings thereby.” And this he makes to be the measure of truth and falsehood. If he knew any other rule of faith besides the Scriptures, he would have mentioned it in this place; and not have directed men only to them, as “the exact measure of truth and falsehood.”

In the beginning of this century, Thomas Walden (Confessor to our Henry V. saith Trithemius), disputed sharply against Wickliffe; but he durst not set up the Church’s authority, or tradition, equal with the Scriptures. For when he mentions tradition after Scriptures, he utterly “disclaims any such thought as that of equality between them;”‡ but he desires a due distance may be kept between canonical Scripture, and ecclesiastical authority, or tradition. In the first place, he saith, “we ought to believe the holy Scriptures; then the definitions and customs of the catholic Church;”§ but he

* Nam in concernentibus fidem, etiam dictum unius privati esset præferendum dicto Papæ, si ille moveretur melioribus rationibus novi et veteris Testamenti quam Papæ.

† Cum ergo in omni veritate veritas divina sit certior et immutabilior, ergo omnes aliæ debent regulari per illam, et in quantum conformantur illi, sunt veræ; in quantum autem deviant ab illa, deviant à natura veritatis. Sacra autem Scriptura veritas divina est, ideo iudicium nostrum debemus regulare per illam applicando ad eam, &c. Tostat. in Ep. Hieron. c. 6. p. 28. D. [fol. 16. p. 2. col. 2. Venet. 1596.]

‡ Non quod in auctoritate æquantur, absit; sed sequantur; non quidem in subsidium auctoritatis Canonice, sed in admonitionem posterorum. l. 2. Art. 2. c. 22. § C. 28.

more fully explains himself in another place, where he plainly asserts,* “that nothing else is to be received by such faith as the Scripture and Christ’s symbolical Church; but for all other authorities, the lowest degree is that of catholic tradition; the next of the bishops, especially of the Apostolical Churches, and the Roman in the first place; and above all these, he places that of a General Council;” but when he hath so done, he saith, “all these authorities are to be regarded but as the instructions of elders, and admonitions of fathers.” So that the chief opposers of Wickliffe had not yet found out this new rule of faith.

Much about the same time lived Joh. Gerson,† whom Cardinal Zabarella declared, in the Council of Constance, to be the greatest divine of his time, and therefore could not be ignorant of the true rule of faith. He agrees with Panormitan in this, “that if a man be well skilled in Scripture, his doctrine deserves more to be regarded than the Pope’s declaration; for,” saith he, “the Gospel is more to be believed than the Pope, and if such an one teaches a doctrine to be contained in Scripture, which the Pope either knows not, or mistakes, it is plain whose judgment is to be preferred.” Nay, he goes farther, “that if in a General Council, he finds the majority incline to that part which is contrary to Scripture, he is bound to oppose it,” and he instances in Hilary. And he shews, “that since the canon of Scripture is received by the Church, no authority of the Church is to be equalled to it.”‡ He allows a judgment of discretion in private persons, and a certainty of the literal sense of Scripture attainable thereby. He makes,§ “the Scripture the only standing infallible rule of faith for the whole Church to the end of the world. And whatever doctrine is not agreeable thereto, is to be rejected either as heretical, suspicious, or impertinent to religion.” If the Council of Trent had gone by this rule, we had never heard of the Creed of Pius IV.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century lived Nicolaus de

* C. 27.

† Joh. Gerson, Exam. Doctr. p. 540. [Par. 1606.] Part 1. Cons. 5.

‡ Cons. 6. [Ibid.]

§ Nihil audendum dicere de divinis, nisi quæ nobis à sacra scriptura tradita sunt. Cujus ratio est, quoniam scriptura nobis tradita est tanquam regula sufficiens et infallibilis, pro Regimine totius Ecclesiastici corporis et membrorum usque in finem seculi. Est igitur talis Ars, talis regula, vel exemplar, cui se non conformans alia Doctrina, vel abjicienda est ut hæreticalis, aut suspecta, aut impertinens ad Religionem prorsus est habenda. Exam. Doctr. Part. 2. Consid. 1. [Ibid. p. 541.]

Lyra,* who parallels the Scriptures in matters of faith with first principles in sciences ; for “as other truths are tried in them by their reduction to first principles, so are matters of faith by their reduction to canonical Scriptures, which are of Divine revelation, which is impossible to be false.” If he had known any other principles which would have made faith impossible to be false, he would never have spoken thus of Scripture alone. But to return to the school divines.

About the same time lived Joh. Duns Scotus,† the head of a school, famous for subtlety ; he affirms, “That the holy Scripture doth sufficiently contain all matters necessary to salvation ; because by it we know what we are to believe, hope for, and practise.” And after he hath enlarged upon them, he concludes in these words, *Patet quod Scriptura sacra sufficienter continet doctrinam necessariam viatori.*” If this be understood only of points simply necessary, then however it proves, that all such things necessary to salvation, are therein contained ; and no man is bound to inquire after unnecessary points. How then can it be necessary to embrace another rule of faith, when all things necessary to salvation are sufficiently contained in Scripture ?

But Thomas Aquinas is more express in this matter ; for he saith,‡ “that those things which depend on the will of God, and are above any desert of ours, can be known no otherwise by us than as they are delivered in Scripture, by which the will of God is made known to us.”

This is so remarkable a passage, that Suarez § could not let it escape without corrupting it ; for instead of Scripture, he makes him to speak of Divine revelation in general, *viz.* under “Scripture he comprehends all, that is, under the *written* word, he means the *unwritten*.” If he had meant so, he was able to have expressed his own mind more plainly ; and Cajetan apprehended no such meaning in his words. But this a matter of so great consequence, that I shall prove from other passages in him, that he asserted the same doctrine, *viz.* that the Scripture was the only rule of faith.

1. He makes “no proofs of matters of faith to be sufficient,||

* Lyra, Præfat. ab lib. Tobie.

† Scot. in Sentent. Prolog. Q. 2. n. 14. [p. 13. col. 2. Venet. 1597.]

‡ Ea enim quæ ex sola Dei voluntate supra omne debitum Creaturæ, nobis innotescere non possunt, nisi quatenus in sacra Scriptura traduntur, per quam Divina voluntas nobis innotescit. 3. q. 1. a. 3. in C. [ut supra, vol. 24. p. 4. col. 2.]

§ Suarez. in 3. p. 117. [vol. 16. p. 102. col. 1. Venet. 1745.]

|| Authoritatibus autem Canonice Scripturæ utitur proprie ex necessi-

but such as are deduced from Scripture; and all other arguments from authority to be only probable; nay, although such persons had particular revelations." How can this be consistent with another rule of faith distinct from Scripture? For if he had owned any such, he must have deduced necessary arguments from thence as well as from canonical Scriptures. But if all other authorities be only probable, then they cannot make anything necessary to be believed.

2. He affirms,* "that to those who receive the Scriptures, we are to prove nothing but by the Scriptures, as matter of faith." For by authorities, he means nothing but the Scriptures; as appears by the former place, and by what follows,† where he mentions the canon of Scripture expressly.

3. He asserts,‡ "That the articles of the Creed are all contained in Scripture, and are drawn out of Scripture, and put together by the Church only for the ease of the people." From hence it necessarily follows, that the reason of believing the articles of the Creed is to be taken from the written word, and not from any unwritten tradition. For else he needed not to have been so careful to shew that they were all taken out of Scripture.

4. He distinguisheth the matters of faith in Scripture: "some to be believed for themselves," which he calls "*prima credibilia*;" these, he saith,§ "every one is bound explicitly to believe; but for other things he is bound only implicitly, or in

tate argumentando; autoritatibus autem aliorum Doctorum Ecclesiæ, quasi arguendo ex propriis sed probabiliter. Innititur enim fides nostra Revelationi Apostolis et Prophetis factæ, qui Canonicos libros scripserunt; non autem Revelationi si qua fuit aliis Doctoribus facta. 1. q. 1. a. 8. ad 2. [ut supra, vol. 20. p. 6. col. 1.]

* Quæ igitur fidei sunt, non sunt tentanda probari nisi per auctoritates his qui Auctoritates suscipiunt. 1 q. 32. a. 1. c. [Ibid. p. 157. col. 1.]

† Si autem ad veritatem eloquiorum, sc. sacrorum respicit, hoc et nos Canone utimur. Ib.

‡ Dicendum quod veritas fidei in Sacra Scriptura diffusè continetur — ideo fuit necessarium ut ex sententiis Sacræ Scripturæ aliquid manifestum summarè colligeretur, quod proponeretur omnibus ad credendum; quod quidem non est additum Sacræ Scripturæ, sed potius ex Sacra Scriptura sumptum. 2. 2. q. 1. a. 9. ad primum. [Ibid. vol. 22. p. 9. col. 2.]

§ Quantum ad prima Credibilia, quæ sunt Articuli fidei, tenetur homo explicitè credere, sicut et tenetur habere fidem. Quantum autem ad alia credibilia non tenetur homo explicitè credere, sed solùm implicitè, vel in præparatione animi in quantum paratus est credere quicquid Scriptura continet; sed tunc solùm hujusmodi tenetur explicitè credere, quando hoc ei constiterit in Doctrina fidei contineri. 2. 2. q. 2. a. 5. c. [Ibid. p. 15. col. 1.]

a preparation of mind, to believe whatever is contained in Scripture; and then only is he bound to believe explicitly when it is made clear to him, to be contained in the doctrine of faith." Which words must imply the Scripture to be the only rule of faith; for otherwise, implicit faith must relate to whatever is proved to be an unwritten word.

From all this it appears, that Aquinas knew nothing of a traditional rule of faith, although he lived after the Lateran Council, A. D. 1215, being born about nine years after it.

And Bonaventure, who died the same year with him, affirms,* "that nothing was to be said (about matters of faith), but what is made clear out of the holy Scriptures."

Not long after them, lived Henricus Gandavensis; and he delivers these things, which are very material to our purpose.

1. "That the† reason why we believe the guides of the Church since the Apostles, who work no miracles, is, because they preach nothing but what they have left in their most certain writings, which are delivered down to us pure and uncorrupt, by an universal consent of all that succeeded to our times." Where we see he makes the Scriptures to be the only certain rule, and that we are to judge of all other doctrines by them.

2. "That truth is more certainly preserved in Scripture than in the Church;‡ because that is fixed and immutable, and men are variable, so that multitudes of them may depart from the faith, either through error or malice; but the true Church will always remain in some righteous persons." How then can tradition be a rule of faith equal with Scriptures, which depends upon the testimony of persons who are so very fallible?

I might carry this way of testimony on higher still, as when Richardus de St. Victore saith, in the thirteenth century,

* Et nihil nobis dicendum est, præter ea quæ nobis ex sacris eloquiis clarent. Bonav. in 3. Sent. Dist. 1. Art. 2. q. 2.

† Quod autem credimus posterioribus circa quos non apparent virtutes divinæ, hoc est, quia non prædicant alia quàm quæ illi in scriptis certissimis relinquērunt, quæ constat per medios in nullo fuisse vitiata ex consensione concordii in eis omnium succedentium usque ad tempora nostra. Hen. Gandav. Sum. Art. 9. q. 3. n. 13. 2.

‡ Quia veritas ipsa in Scriptura immobiliter et impermutabiliter semper custoditur.—In personis autem Ecclesiæ mutabilis est et variabilis, ut dissentire fidei possit multitudo illorum, et vel per errorem, vel per malitiam à fide discedere licet; semper Ecclesia in aliquibus justis stabit. Art. 8. q. 1. n. 5.

“that every truth is suspected by him, which is not confirmed by holy Scripture ;”* but instead of that, I shall now proceed to the Canon Law, as having more authority than particular testimonies.

3. As to the Canon Law, collected by Gratian, I do not insist upon its confirmation by Eugenius, but upon its universal reception in the Church of Rome. And from thence I shall evidently prove, that tradition was not allowed to be a rule of faith equal with the Scriptures.

Dist. 9. c. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10. [p. 15, 16. Colon. Munat. 1670.] “The authority and infallibility of the holy Scripture is asserted above all other writings whatsoever ; for all other writings are to be examined, and men are to judge of them as they see cause.”

Now Bellarmine tells us,† “that the unwritten word is so called, not that it always continues unwritten, but that it was so by the first author of it.” So that the unwritten word doth not depend on mere oral tradition, according to him, but it may be found in the writers of the Church ;‡ but the Canon Law expressly excludes all other writings, let them contain what they will, from being admitted to any competition with canonical Scripture ; and therefore, according to that, no part of the rule of faith was contained in any other than canonical Scriptures.

Dist. 37. c. Relatum. A man is supposed to “have an entire and firm rule of faith in the Scriptures.”§

Caus. 8. q. 1. c. Nec sufficere.|| “The Scriptures are said to be the only rule both of faith and life.”

And the Gloss on the Canon Law there, owns the Scripture to be the rule for matters of faith ; but very pleasantly applies it to the clergy, and thinks images enough for the laity.

Caus. 24. q. 1. c. Non afferamus. [Ibid. p. 849.] The Scriptures are acknowledged to be the true balance ; and that we are not so much to weigh what we find there, as to

* *Suspecta est mihi omnis veritas, quam non confirmat Scripturarum Auctoritas.* Rich. de S. Victore, *De Præpar. Animi ad Contempl.* Part. 1. c. 81. [p. 147. Venet. 1692.]

† *De Verbo Dei*, l. 4. c. 2. [ut supra, p. 100. col. 2.] ‡ C. 12.

§ *Cum enim ex divinis Scripturis integram quis et firmam Regulam veritatis suscepit.* [p. 125. Colon. Munat. 1670.]

|| *Quibus sacris literis unica est credendi pariter et vivendi Regula præscripta.* [Ibid. p. 519.]

own what we find there already weighed. Which must imply the Scripture alone to be that measure we are to trust to.

Dist. 8. c. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. [Ibid. p. 13, 14.] It is there said, "that custom must yield to truth and reason, when that is discovered, and that for this reason, because Christ said, I am truth, and not custom." Now, if tradition be an infallible rule of faith, custom ought always to be presumed to have truth and reason of its side. For, if we can once suppose a custom to prevail in the Church against truth and reason, it is impossible that tradition should be infallible; for what is that but ancient custom?

Caus. 11. q. 3. c. 101. Si is qui præest. [Ibid. p. 584.] "If any one commands what God hath forbidden, or forbids what God hath commanded, he is to be accursed of all that love God. And if he requires any thing besides the will of God, or what God hath evidently required in Scripture, he is to be looked on as a false witness of God, and a sacrilegious person." How can this be, if there be another infallible way of conveying the will of God, besides the Scriptures?

*Caus. 24. q. 3. c. 30. c. Quid autem.** In matters of doubt it is said, "that men are to fly to the written word for satisfaction, and that it is folly not to do it." It is true, men's own fancies are opposed to Scripture, but against men's fancies no other rule is mentioned, but that of the written word.

Joh. 22. Extravag. c. Quia quorundam. Tit. 14, makes his appeal to Scripture in the controversy then on foot about use and property; *Dicant nobis ubi legunt, &c.* and he shews,† "that if it were a matter of faith, it must be contained in Scripture, either expressly, or by deduction; otherwise the Scripture would be no certain rule; and by consequence, the articles of faith, which are proved by Scripture, would be rendered doubtful and uncertain."

The Glosser there saith, "Whence comes this consequence?" and refers to another place, where he makes it out thus; "that faith can only be proved by the Scripture, and therefore if the authority of that be destroyed, faith would be taken

* Sed in hanc insipientiam cadunt, qui cum ad cognoscendam veritatem aliquo impediuntur obscuro, non ad Propheticas voces, non ad Apostolicas literas, nec ad Evangelicas auctoritates, sed ad seipsos recurrunt. [Ibid. p. 871.]

† Nec quasi hoc sacra Scriptura contineat, quo negato tota Scriptura sacra redditur dubia; et per consequens articuli fidei, qui habent per Scripturam sacram probari, redduntur dubii et incerti. [Ibid. p. 308.]

away.”* The Roman editors, for an antidote, refer to Cardinal Turrecremata,† who doth indeed speak of catholic truths, which are not to be found in the canon of Scripture; and he quotes a passage in the Canon Law for it, under the name of *Alex. 3. c. cum Marthæ. [Marte] Extrav. de Celebr. Missæ.* but in truth it is *Innoc. 3. Decretal. l. 3. Tit. 41;* and yet this will not prove what he aims at: for the question was about the author of the words added in the Eucharist to those of Christ’s institution; and he pleads that many of Christ’s words and actions are omitted by the Evangelists, which the Apostles afterwards set down; and he instances in St. Paul, as to those words of Christ, “It is more blessed to give than to receive;” and elsewhere. But what is all this to catholic truths not being contained in Scripture, either in words, or by consequence? The Cardinal was here very much to seek, when he had nothing but such a testimony as this to produce in so weighty and so new a doctrine. The best argument he produces,‡ is a horrible blunder of Gratian’s, where St. Augustine seems to reckon the Decretal Epistles equal with the Scriptures, *Dist. 19. c. in Canonicis;* which the Roman correctors were ashamed of, and confess that St. Augustine speaks only of Canonical Epistles in Scripture. So hard must they strain, who among Christians would set up any other rule equal with the written word.

4. I proceed to prove this from the ancient Offices of the Roman Church.

In the Office produced by Morinus,§ out of the Vatican MS. which he saith was very ancient; the Bishop, before his consecration, was asked, “if he would accommodate all his prudence to the best of his skill, to the sense of holy Scripture?”

“*Resp.* Yes, I will with all my heart consent, and obey it in all things.

“*Inter.* Wilt thou teach the people by word and example, the things which thou learnest out of holy Scriptures?

“*Resp.* I will.”

And then immediately follows the *examen* about manners.

In another old Office of St. Victor’s,|| there are the same questions in the same manner.

* Extrav. Joh. 22. Cum inter Gloss. per consequens.

† Turrecrem. de Ecclesia, l. 4. Part. 2. c. 9. [fol. 382. p. 1. Venet. 1561.] ‡ Turrecrem. l. 2. c. 18. [c. 108.] [Ibid. fol. 251. p. 2.]

§ Morin. de Ordinat. Sacris, p. 275. [Par. 1655.]

|| Morin. [Ibid.] p. 333.

And so in another of the Church of Rouen, lately produced by Mabillon,* which he saith, was about William the Conqueror's time, there is not a word about traditions; which crept into the *Ordo Romanus*, and from thence hath been continued in the Roman Pontificals. But it is observable that the *Ordo Romanus* owns that the *examen* was originally taken out of the Gallican Offices (although it does not appear in those imperfect ones, lately published at Rome by Thomassius) and therefore we may justly suspect that the additional questions about traditions, were the Roman interpolations, after it came to be used in that Pontifical.

And the first Office in Morinus, was the true ancient Gallican Office. But if tradition had been then owned as a rule of faith, it ought no more to have been omitted in the ancient offices, than in the modern.

And the ancient writers about ecclesiastical Offices, speak very agreeably to the most ancient Offices about this matter. Amalarius† saith, “the Gospel is the fountain of wisdom; and that the preachers ought to prove the evangelical truth out of the sacred books.” Isidore:‡ “that we ought to think nothing (as to matters of faith) but what is contained in the two Testaments.” Rabanus Maurus:§ “that the knowledge of the Scriptures, is the foundation and perfection of prudence. That truth and wisdom are to be tried by them; and the perfect instruction of life is contained in them.” Our Venerable Bede|| agrees with them, when he saith, “that the true teachers take out of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, that which they preach: and therefore have their minds employed, in finding out the true meaning of them.”

5. I now come to the Fathers,¶ wherein I am in great measure prevented by a late discourse, wherein it is at large shewed, that the Fathers made use of no other rule but the Scriptures, for deciding controversies; therefore I shall take another method, which is to shew, that those who do speak

* Mabillon Analect. to. 2. p. 468. [Par. 1675.]

† Amalarius de Officiis, l. 3. c. 5. [Apud Hittorp. De Divin. Cath. Eccles. Officiis, p. 401. Par. 1610.]

‡ Isidor. de Offic. l. 2. c. 23. [p. 410. col. 2. Colon. Agr. 1617.]

§ Rab. Maur. de Inst. Cler. l. 3. c. 2. [Apud Hittorp. ut supra, p. 628.] l. 2. c. 53. [Ibid. p. 617.]

|| Bed. in Cant. l. 5. [vol. 4. p. 785. Colon. Agr. 1612.] De Tabernaculo, l. 1. c. 6.

¶ Vindic. of the Answ. to some late Papers.

most advantageously of tradition, did not intend to set up another rule of faith distinct from Scripture.

And here I shall pass over all those testimonies of Fathers which speak either of tradition before the canon of Scripture, or to those who did not receive it, or of the tradition of Scripture itself, or of some rites and customs of the Church, as wholly impertinent. And when these are cut off, there remain scarce any to be considered, besides that of Vincentius Lerinensis, and one testimony of St. Basil.

I begin with Vincentius Lerinensis, who by some is thought so great a favourer of tradition; but he saith not a word of it as a rule of faith distinct from Scripture; for he asserts the "canon of Scripture to be sufficient of itself for all things."* How can that be, if tradition be a rule of faith distinct from it? He makes, indeed, catholic tradition the best interpreter of Scripture; and we have no reason to decline it in the points in dispute between us, if Vincentius's rules be followed.

1. If antiquity, universality, and consent be joined.

2. If the difference be observed between old errors and new ones. For, saith he,† when they have had length of time, truth is more easily concealed by those who are concerned to suppress it. And in those cases we have no other way to deal with them, but by Scripture and ancient Councils. And this is the rule we profess to hold to.

But to suppose any one part of the Church to assume to itself the title of Catholic, and then to determine what is to be held for catholic tradition by all members of the Catholic Church, is a thing in itself unreasonable, and leaves that part under an impossibility of being reclaimed. For in case the corrupt be judge, we may be sure no corruptions will be ever owned. Vincentius grants‡ that Arianism had once extremely the advantage in point of universality, and had many Councils of its side; if now the prevailing party be to judge of catholic tradition, and all are bound to submit to its decrees without farther examination, as the author§ of the Guide in Controversies saith upon these rules of Vincentius; then, I say, all men were then bound to declare themselves Arians. For if "the guides of the present Church are to be trusted and relied upon for the doctrine of the Apostolical Church downwards;" how

* Commonit. 1. c. 2. Cum sit perfectus Scripturarum Canon, sibi que ad omnia satis superque sufficiat.

† C. 39.

‡ C. 6.

§ Of the Necessity of Church Guides, p. 201

was it possible for any members of the Church then to oppose Arianism, and to reform the Church after its prevalency? To say "it was condemned by a former Council,"* doth by no means clear the difficulty; for the present guides must be trusted, whether they were rightly condemned or not; and nothing can be more certain, than that they would be sure to condemn those who condemned them. But Vincentius saith, "Every true lover of Christ preferred the ancient faith, before the novel betraying of it;" but then he must choose this ancient faith against the judgment of the present guides of the Church. And therefore that, according to Vincentius, can be no infallible rule of faith.

But whether the present universality dissents from antiquity, whose judgment should be sooner taken than its own? saith the same author. This had been an excellent argument in the mouth of Ursacius, or Valens, at the Council of Ariminum; and I do not see what answer the Guide in Controversies could have made. But both are parties, and is not the Council's judgment to be taken rather than a few opposers? So that, for all that I can find by these principles, Arianism having the greater number, had hard luck not to be established as the Catholic faith. But if in that case, particular persons were to judge between the new and the old faith, then the same reason will still hold, unless the guides of the Church have obtained a new patent of infallibility since that time.

The great question among us, is, where the true ancient faith is; and how we may come to find it out? We are willing to follow the ancient rules in this matter. The Scripture is allowed to be an infallible rule on all hands; and I am proving that tradition was not allowed in the ancient Church, as distinct from it. But the present question is, how far tradition is to be allowed in giving the sense of Scripture between us. Vincentius saith, "We ought to follow it when there is antiquity, universality, and consent:" this we are willing to be tried by. But here comes another question, who is to be judge of these? "The present guides of the Catholic Church?" To what purpose then are all those rules? Will they condemn themselves? Or, as the Guide admirably saith,† "If the present universality be its own judge, when can we think it will witness its departure from the true faith?" And if it will not, what a case is the Church in, under such a pretended universality?

* P. 199.

† P. 199.

The utmost use I can suppose then, Vincentius's rule can be of to us now, is in that case which he puts, when corruptions and errors have had time to take root and fasten themselves; and that is, "by an appeal to Scripture and ancient Councils." But because of the charge of innovation upon us, we are content to be tried by his second rule. "By the consent of the Fathers of greatest reputation, who are agreed on all hands to have lived and died in the communion of the catholic Church: and what they delivered freely, constantly and unanimously, let that be taken for the undoubted and certain rule in judging between us." But if the present guides must come in to be judges here again, then all our labour is lost, and Vincentius's rules signify just nothing.

The testimony of St. Basil is, by Mr. White, magnified above the rest,* and that out of his book *de Spiritu Sancto*, above all others, to prove that the certainty of faith depends on tradition; and not merely on Scripture. The force of it is said to lie in this, "that the practice of the Church, in saying, with the Holy Spirit, though not found in Scripture, is to determine the sense of the article of faith about the divinity of the Holy Ghost." But to clear this place, we are to observe,

1. That St. Basil doth not insist on tradition for the proof of this article of faith, for he expressly disowns it in that book: "It is not enough," saith he,† "that we have it by tradition from our Fathers; for our Fathers had it from the will of God in Scripture, as appears by those testimonies I have set down already, which they took for their foundations." Nothing can be plainer, than that St. Basil made Scripture alone the foundation of faith as to this point. And no one, upon all occasions, speaks more expressly than he doth, as to the sufficiency of Scripture for a rule of faith;‡ and he was too great, and too wise a man to contradict himself.

2. That there were different forms of speech used in the Church concerning the Holy Ghost,§ some taken out of Scripture, and others received by tradition from the Fathers.||

* Tabulæ Suffragial. p. 54.

† 'Αλλ' οὐ τοῦτο ἡμῖν ἐξαρκεῖ, ὅτι τῶν πατέρων ἡ παράδοσις, κακείνοι γὰρ τῷ βουλήματι τῆς γραφῆς ἠκολούθησαν, ἐκ τῶν μαρτυριῶν, ἃς μικρῶ πρόσθεν ὑμῖν ἐκ τῆς γραφῆς παρεδέμεθα, τὰς ἀρχὰς λαβόντες. De Sp. Sancto, c. 7. [vol. 3. p. 18. Par. 1839.]

‡ De Vera Fide, p. 386. A. C. p. 391. C.

§ Ascet. Reg. 26. Reg. 80. c. 22.

|| De Sp. Sanct. c. 9. [Ibid. vol. 3. p. 25, 26.]

When he proves the divinity of the Holy Ghost, he appeals to Scripture, and declares, that he would neither think nor speak otherwise than he found there.* But it was objected, that the form St. Basil used was not found in Scripture;† he answers, that the equivalent is there found; and that there were some things received by tradition, which had the same force towards piety. And if we take away all unwritten customs, we shall do wrong to the Gospel, and leave a bare name to the public preaching. And from thence he insists on some traditionary rites, as the sign of the cross, praying towards the east, &c. His business is to shew, that to the greater solemnity of Christian worship, several customs were observed in the Church, which are not to be found in Scripture. And if other ancient customs were received, which are not commanded in Scripture,‡ he sees no reason that they should find such fault with this. And this is the whole force of St. Basil's reasoning, which can never be stretched to the setting up tradition as a rule of faith distinct from Scripture.

Having thus shewed that there was no catholic tradition for this new rule of faith, I am now to give an account how it came into the Church.

The first step that was made towards it, was by the second Council of Nice. For, although the Emperor, in the synodical Epistle, proposed to them the true ancient method of judging the Councils, "by the books of Scripture placed on a throne in the middle of the Council:" yet they found, they could by no means do their business that way; and therefore, as Bellarmine observes, they set up tradition in the sixth and seventh sessions, and pronounced anathemas against those who rejected unwritten traditions. But although there were then almost as little pretence for tradition, as Scripture, in the matter of images;§ yet there having been a practice among them, to set up and to worship images (which Richerius thinks came first into the Church, from the reverence shewed to the Emperor's statues), they thought this the securest way to advance that which they could never defend by Scripture.

But this prevailed very little in the Western Church, as is well known by the rejection of that synod; however, Pope Hadrian joined with them, and produced a wretched tradition

* C. 10. [Ibid. p. 28.]

† C. 21. [Ibid. p. 60.]

‡ C. 29. [Ibid. p. 83.]

§ Richer. Hist. Conc. General. l. 1. c. 11. n. 13.

about Sylvester and Constantine, to justify their proceedings ; as appears by the acts of that Council. And from the time that images were received at Rome, the force of tradition was magnified ; and by degrees, it came to be made use of to justify other practices, for which they had nothing else to plead.

Hitherto tradition was made use of for matters of practice, and the Scripture was generally received as the rule of faith ; but some of the Schoolmen found it impossible to defend some doctrines held in the Church of Rome by mere Scripture, and therefore they were forced to call in the help of tradition. The most remarkable of these was Scotus, who, although in his prologue he asserted, as is said already, “ that the Scripture did sufficiently contain all things necessary to salvation ;” yet when he came to particular points, he found Scripture alone would never do their business. And especially as to the sacraments of the Church, about which, he saw the Church of Rome then held many things which could never be proved from thence.* And this was the true occasion of traditions being taken in for a partial rule.

For after the Council of Lateran had declared several things to be of faith, which were in no former Creeds, as Scotus confesses,† and they were bound to defend them as points of faith, the men of wit and subtlety, such as Scotus was, were very hard put to it, to find out ways to prove those to have been old points of faith, which they knew to be very new. Then they betook themselves to two things, which would serve for a colour to blind the common people ; and those were,

1. That it was true, these things were not in Scripture ; but Christ said to his disciples, “ I have many things to say unto you,” &c. and among those many things, they were to believe these new doctrines to be some.

2. When this would not serve, then they told them, though these doctrines were not explicitly in Scripture, yet they were implicitly there ; and the Church had authority to fetch them out of those dark places, and to set them in a better light. And thus Scotus helped himself out in that dark point of transubstantiation.‡ First, he attempts to make it out by tradition ; but finding that would not do the business effectually, he runs to the authority of the Church, especially in the business of sacraments, and “ we are to suppose,” saith he,

* Scot. in. l. 1. Sent. Dist. 11.

† L. 4. Dist. 11. n. 15.

‡ N. 13.

“that the Church doth expound the Scriptures with the same Spirit which indited them.” This was a brave supposition indeed, but he offers no proof of it.

If we allow Scotus to have been the introducer of tradition, as to some points of faith, yet I have made it appear, that his doctrine was not received in the schools. But after the Council of Constance had declared several propositions to be heretical, which could not be condemned by Scripture, there was found a necessity of holding, that there were catholic truths not contained in Scripture. The first proposition there condemned was, “That the substance of bread and wine remains in the sacrament of the altar:” the second, “That the accidents do not remain without their subject:” now how could such as these be condemned by Scripture? But although only some were said to be heretical, yet all were said to be against catholic truth. But where is this catholic truth to be found? Cardinal Cusanus thought of a current sense of Scripture,* according to the Church’s occasions; so that though the Church’s practice should be directly contrary, yet the Scripture was to be understood as the Church practised. This was a very plain and effectual way, if it had not been too gross; and therefore it was thought much better by Cardinal Turrecremata, to found catholic verities on unwritten tradition, as well as on Scripture.

After this, Leo X. in his famous bull against Luther, *Exurge Domine*, made a farther step; for the 22nd proposition condemned therein, is, “That it is certain that it is not in the power of the Church or Pope to appoint new articles of faith.” It seems then the Pope or Church have a power to constitute new articles of faith; and then neither Scripture nor tradition can be the certain rule of faith, but the present Church or Pope.

This had put an end to the business, if it would have taken; but the world being wiser, and the errors and corruptions complained of not being to be defended by Scripture, tradition was pitched upon as a secure way; and accordingly several attempts were made towards the setting of it up, by some provincial Councils, before that of Trent. So in the Council of Sens, 1527, can. 53, it is declared to be a pernicious error

* Scripturas esse ad tempus adaptatas et varie intellectas, ità ut uno tempore secundum currentem ritum exponerentur, mutato ritu iterum sententia mutaretur. Cusan. ad Bohem. Epist. 2. [p. 833. Basil. 1565.]

to receive nothing but what is deduced from Scripture, because Christ delivered many things to his Apostles which were never written. But not one thing is alleged as a matter of faith so conveyed ; but only some rites about sacraments and prayer ; and yet he is declared a heretic as well as schismatic, who rejects them. Indeed, the Apostles' Creed is mentioned, but not as to the articles contained in it, but as to the authors of it. But what is there in all this, that makes a man guilty of heresy ?

Jod. Clithoveus, a doctor of Paris, the next year wrote an explication and defence of this Council, but he mistakes the point ; for he runs upon it as if it were, " whether all things to be believed and observed in the Church, were to be expressly set down in Scripture ? " whereas a just consequence out of it is sufficient. And the greatest strength of what he saith to the purpose, is, " that the other opinion was condemned in the Council of Constance."

And from no better a tradition than this, did the Council of Trent declare " the unwritten word to be a rule of faith equal with the Scriptures."

II. *About the Canon of Scripture, defined by the Council of Trent.*

This is declared by the Council of Trent, Sess. 4, and therein the books of Tobias, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Maccabees and Baruch are received for canonical, with the twenty-two Books in the Hebrew canon, and an anathema is denounced against those who do not. And presently he adds, " that hereby the world might see what authorities the Council proceeded on for confirming matters of faith, as well as reforming manners."

Now to shew that there was no catholic tradition for the ground of this decree, we are to observe,

1. That these canonical books are not so called in a large sense for such as have been used or read in the Church ; but in the strict sense for such as are a good foundation to build matters of faith upon.

2. That these books were not so received by all, even in the Council of Trent. For what is received by virtue of a catholic tradition, must be universally received by the members of it. But that so it was not, appears by the account given by both the historians.* F. Paul saith, " that in the congregation

* Hist. of the Council of Trent, l. 2. p. 154. [p. 144. Lond. 1676.]

there were two different opinions of those who were for a particular catalogue ; one was to distinguish the books into three parts, the other to make all the books of equal authority ; and that this latter was carried by the greater number." Now if this were a catholic tradition, how was it possible for the Fathers of the Council to divide about it? And Cardinal Pallavicini himself saith,* "that Bertanus and Seripandus propounded the putting the books into several classes, some to be read for piety, and others to confirm doctrines of faith ; and that Cardinal Seripando wrote a most learned book to that purpose." What ! against a catholic tradition ? It seems, he was far from believing it to be so. And he confesses,† "that when they came to the anathema, the legates and twenty Fathers were for it ; Madrucci and fourteen were against it, because some Catholics were of another opinion." Then certainly, they knew no catholic tradition for it.

Among these, Cardinal Cajetan is mentioned, "who was," saith Pallavicini, "severely rebuked for it by Melchior Canus ;" but what is that to the tradition of the Church ? Canus doth indeed appeal to the Council of Carthage,‡ Innocentius I., and the Council of Florence ; but this doth not make up a catholic tradition against Cajetan ;§ who declares that he follows St. Jerome, who cast those books out of the canon, with respect to faith. And he answers the arguments brought on the other side, by this distinction, that they are canonical for edification, but not for faith.|| If therefore Canus would have confuted Cajetan, he ought to have proved that they were owned for canonical in the latter sense. Cajetan, in his epistle to Clement VII. before the historical books, owns the great obligation of the Church to St. Jerome, for distinguishing *canonical* and *apocryphal* books ; and saith, "that he hath freed it from the reproach of the Jews, who said the Christians made canonical books of the Old Testament, which they knew nothing of." And this was an argument of great consequence ; but Canus takes no notice of it, and it fully answers his objection, "that men could not know what books were truly canonical, *viz.* such as were of Divine inspiration, and so received by the Jews." Catharinus saith, in answer to Cajetan,¶

* Ibid. l. 6. c. 11. p. 4. [n. 4.] [vol. 1. p. 573. Antv. 1670.]

† P. 8. [n. 8.] [Ibid. p. 575.]

‡ Can. Loc. Theol. l. 2. c. 11. [p. 69. Colon. Agr. 1605.]

§ Cajet. in Eccles. fine.

|| Ad Esther. c. 10. ad fin.

¶ Annot. in Cajet. l. 1. p. 37. [Par. 1535.]

“that the Jews had one canon, and the Church another.” But how comes the canon to be received as of Divine inspiration, which was not so received among the Jews? This were to resolve all into the Church’s inspiration, and not into tradition.

Bellarmino grants,* “that the Church can by no means make a book canonical which is not so, but only declare what is canonical; and that, not at pleasure, but from ancient testimonies, from similitude of style with books uncontroverted, and the general sense and taste of Christian people.” Now the case here relates to books not first written to Christians, but among the Jews, from whom we receive the oracles of God committed to them. And if the Jews never believed these books to contain the oracles of God in them, how can the Christian Church embrace them for such, unless it assumes a power to make, and not merely to declare canonical books? For he grants we have no testimony of the Jews for them.

But Catharinus himself cannot deny that St. Jerome saith, “that although the Church reads those books, yet it doth not receive them for canonical Scriptures.” And he makes a pitiful answer to it. For he confesses, “that the Church taken for the body of the faithful, did not receive them; but as taken for the governors, it did.” But others grant that they did receive them no more than the people;† and as to the other, the cause of tradition is plainly given up. And in truth, he resolves all at last into the opinion of the Popes Innocentius, Gelasius, and Eugenius IV. But we are obliged to him for letting us know the secret of so much zeal for these apocryphal books,‡ *viz.* “that they are of great force against the heretics; for purgatory is no where so expressly mentioned, as in the Maccabees.” If it had not been for this, St. Jerome and Cajetan might have escaped censure, and the Jewish canon had been sufficient.

But to shew, that there hath been no catholic tradition about the Tridentine Canon, I shall prove these two things:

1. That there hath been a constant tradition against it in the Eastern Church.
2. That there never was a constant tradition for it in the Western Church.

1. That there hath been a constant tradition against it in the

* De Verb. Dei, l. 1. c. 11. [c. 10.] [vol. 1. p. 19. col. 2. Prag. 1721.]

† Jul. Ruger. de Libris Canonicis, p. 80.

‡ P. 41.

Eastern Church, which received the Jewish canon, without the books declared canonical by the Council of Trent. We have very early evidence of this, in the testimony of Melito, bishop of Sardis, who lived not long after the middle of the second century, and made it his business to inquire into this matter, and he delivers but twenty-two books of the Old Testament. The same is done by Origen in the next, who took infinite pains, as Eusebius* saith, in searching after the copies of the Old Testament. And these testimonies are preserved by Eusebius† in the following century; and himself declares, "that there was no sacred book among the Jews from the time of Zerubbabel;"‡ which cuts off the books canonized by the Council of Trent. In the same age we have the testimonies of Athanasius,§ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, Amphilochius, and St. Chrysostom. It is not to be imagined that a tradition should be better attested in one age than this was, by so considerable men in different Churches, who gave in the testimony of all those Churches they belonged to. And yet besides these we have in that age a concurrent testimony of a Council of bishops at Laodicea,|| from several provinces of Asia; and which is yet more, this canon of theirs was received into the code of the catholic Church; and so owned by the Council of Chalcedon, which, by its first canon, gives authority to it. And Justinian allows the force of laws to the canons which were either made or confirmed by the four General Councils. But it is the point of tradition I am upon; and therefore Justinian's Novel¶ may at least be a strong evidence of that in the sixth century. In the seventh, Leontius** gives his own testimony, and that of Theodorus. In the eighth, Damascen expressly owns the Hebrew canon of twenty-

* Euseb. l. 4. c. 25. l. 6. c. 25. [p. 225, 226. Par. 1659.] Philocal. c. 3.

† Euseb. Demonstr. l. 8. p. 368. [Colon. 1688.]

‡ Chronic. Gr. p. 172.

§ Athanas. Ep. 39. [vol. 2. p. 44. Heidelb. 1600.] Cyril. Catech. 4. [p. 69. Venet. 1763.] Epiph. de Mensuris et Ponder. [vol. 2. p. 161, 162. Colon. 1682.] Basil. in Origen. Philocal. Greg. Nazianzen. in Carm. Amph. in Canon. Ep. apud Balsam. St. Chrysost. in Gen. hom. 4. [vol. 4. p. 32. Par. 1837.]

|| Conc. Laodicen. c. 59. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 1. p. 1515. Lut. Par. 1674.]

¶ Novel. 131.

** Leont. de Sectis Act. 2. Damascen. de Fide, l. 4. c. 18. [c. 17.] [vol. 1. p. 283. Par. 1712.]

two books, and excludes by name some of the books made canonical at Trent. In the ninth, we have the testimony of Nicephorus,* patriarch of Constantinople, if he be the author of the *Laterculus*, at the end of his Chronography; but if he be not, he must be an author of that age, being translated by Anastasius Bibliothecarius.† In the twelfth, Balsamon and Zonaras refer to the Council of Laodicea, and the Greek Fathers. In the fourteenth, Nicephorus Callistus reckons but twenty-two books of the Old Testament. And in this age, we have the clear testimony of Metrophanes (afterwards patriarch of Alexandria), who saith, “there are but twenty-two canonical books of the Old Testament; but the rest,” *i. e.* Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch and Maccabees are useful, and therefore not wholly to be rejected, but the Church never received them for canonical and authentical, as appears by many testimonies, as, among others, of Gregory the Divine, Amphilochius and Damascen; and therefore we never prove matters of faith out of them.

2. Let us now compare this tradition with that of the Western Church, for the new canon of Trent. It cannot be denied, that Innocentius I. and Gelasius, did enlarge the canon, and took in the Apocryphal books (unless we call in question the writings under their names); but granting them genuine, I shall shew that there is no comparison between this tradition, and that of the Eastern Church, and therefore there could be no possible reason for the Council of Trent to make a decree for this tradition, and to anathematize all who did not submit to it. For,

1. This tradition was not universally received at that time. Innocentius’s epistle is supposed to be written A.D. 405. Was the Western Church agreed before or after about this matter? This epistle was written to Exuperius, a Gallican bishop (to whom St. Jerome dedicated his commentaries on Zechariah), but now it unluckily falls out, that the tradition of the Gallican Church was contrary to this; as appears by St. Hilary* (who could not be ignorant of it, being a famous bishop of that Church), and he tells us, “there were but twenty-two canonical books of the Old Testament.” I confess, he saith, “some were for adding Tobit and Judith;” but it is very observable,

* Niceph. Chronogr. p. 419.

† Anastas. Hist. p. 189. Not. in Can. 27. Carthag. Niceph. in Epigram. Metroph. Confess. c. 7. p. 82. Phil. Cyprii Chronic. Eccles. Græc. p. 459.

‡ Hilar. Prolog. in Psalm. [p. 10. Veron. 1730.]

that he saith, "that the other account is most agreeable to ancient tradition," which is a mighty argument against Innocentius, who brings no tradition to justify his canon. When St. Augustine produced a place out of the Book of Wisdom,* the divines of Marseilles rejected it; because the book was not canonical. Therefore in that time Innocent's canon was by no means received in the Gallican Church; for by it this book was made canonical. But St. Jerome, who had as much learning as Pope Innocent,† vehemently opposed this new canon, more than once or ten times; and not only speaks of the Jewish canon, but of the canon of the Church. "The Church," saith he, "reads the books of Tobit, Judith, and Maccabees, but the Church doth not receive them among canonical Scriptures." What Church doth he mean? Not the Synagogue certainly. Pope Innocent saith, "Those books are to be received into the canon;" St. Jerome saith, "The Church doth not receive them, but that they are to be cast out:" where is the certainty of tradition to be found? If Innocent were in the right, St. Jerome was foully mistaken, and in plain terms, belied the Church. But how is this consistent with the saintship of St. Jerome? Or with common discretion, if the Church did receive those books for canonical? For every one could have disproved him. And it required no great judgment, or deep learning, to know what books were received, and what not. If St. Jerome were so mistaken (which is very hard to believe), how came Ruffinus not to observe his errors and opposition to the Church? Nay, how came Ruffinus himself to fall into the very same prodigious mistake? For he not only rejects the controverted books out of the canon, but saith, "he followed the ancient tradition therein."‡ What account can be given of this matter? If Innocent's tradition were right, these men were under a gross delusion; and yet they were learned and knowing persons, and more than ordinarily conversant in the doctrines and traditions of the Church.

2. This opinion was not received as a tradition of the Church afterwards. For, if it had been, how could Gregory I.§ reject the Book of Maccabees out of the canon, when two of his predecessors took it in? It is somewhat hard, to suppose one

* De Prædest. Sanctor. c 14. [vol. 10. p. 1371. Par. 1838.]

† Prolog. Gal. Prolog. in lib. Salom. ad Paul. et Eust. ad Chromat.

‡ Ruffin. in Symbol. p. 188, 189. [Oxon. 1682.]

§ Greg. Moral. in Job. l. 19. c. 17.

Pope to contradict two of his predecessors about the canon of Scripture: yet I see not how to avoid it; nor how it is consistent with the constancy of tradition, much less with the pretence to infallibility. He did not merely doubt, as Canus would have it thought,* but he plainly excludes them out of the canon. Catharinus thinks he followed St. Jerome. What then? Doth this exclude his contradicting his predecessors? Or was St. Jerome's judgment above the Pope's? But it was not St. Gregory alone, who contradicted the former Pope's canon; for it was not received either in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, or England; and yet, no doubt, it was a very catholic tradition.

Not in Italy; for there Cassiodore,† a learned and devout man, in the next century to them, gives an account of the canon of Scripture, and he takes not any notice either of Innocent or Gelasius. He first sets down the order of Scripture according to St. Jerome; and then according to St. Augustine; and in the last place according to the old translation, and the LXX.; and where himself speaks of the Apocryphal books before, he follows St. Jerome's opinion, "that they were written rather for manners than doctrine." He confesses there was a difference about the canon: but he goes about to excuse it. But what need that, if there were a catholic tradition then in the Church concerning it, and that enforced by two Popes?

But it may yet seem stranger, that even in Italy, one canonized for a saint by Clement VII. should follow St. Jerome's opinion in this matter, *viz.* St. Antoninus,‡ bishop of Florence. Who, speaking of Ecclesiasticus received into the canon of the two Popes, he saith, "it is only received by the Church to be read, and is not authentic to prove anything in matters of faith." He that writes notes upon him saith, "that he follows St. Jerome, and must be understood of the Eastern Church: for the Western Church always received these books into the canon." But he speaks not one word of the Eastern Church; and by the Church he could understand nothing but what he accounted the catholic Church. Canus§

* Can. Loc. Theol. l. 2. c. 11. ad 4. [p. 69. Colon. Agr. 1605.] Cath. de Canonicis Scrip. in Opuscul. p. 302.

† Cassiodor. de Instit. Divin. liter. c. 12, 13, 14. c. 6. [p. 458, 459, 452. Colon. Allob. 1656.]

‡ St. Antonin. Sum. Hist. P. 1. Tit. 3. c. 4. [p. 65. col. 1. Ludg. 1586.]

§ Can. Loc. Theol. l. 2. c. 11.

allows Antoninus to have rejected these books ; but he thinks the matter not so clear, but that they might doubt concerning it. Then there was no such evidence of tradition to convince men. But Antoninus hath preserved the judgment of a greater man concerning these books,* even Thomas Aquinas, who in 2. *2dæ*. he saith, “denied these books to have such authority as to prove any matter of faith by them :” which is directly contrary to the Council of Trent. If this passage be not now to be found in him, we know whom to blame for it. If Antoninus saw it there, we hope his word may be taken for it.

In Spain, we have for the Hebrew canon, the testimonies of Paulus Burgensis,† Tostatus,‡ and Cardinal Ximenes.§

In France, of Victorinus, Agobardus, Radulphus Flaviacensis, Petrus Cluniacensis, Hugo de St. Victore, and Richard de St. Victore, Lyra, and others.

In Germany, of Rabanus Maurus, Strabo, Rupertus, Hermannus Contractus, and others.

In England, of Bede, Alcuin, Sarisburiensis, Ockam, Waldensis, and others. Whom I barely mention, because their testimonies are at large in Bishop Cosins's Scholastical History of the Canon of Scripture, and no man hath yet had the hardiness to undertake that book.

These, I think, are sufficient to shew, there was no catholic tradition for the decree of the Council of Trent, about the Canon of Scripture.

I now proceed to shew on what pretences and colours it came in, and by what degrees and steps it advanced.

1. The first step was, the esteem which some of the Fathers expressed of these books, in quoting of passages out of them. We do not deny that the Fathers did frequently cite them ; even those who expressly rejected them from being canonical, and not as ordinary books, but as such as were useful to the Church, wherein many wise sayings and good actions are recorded. But the many quotations the Fathers do make out of them, is the only plausible pretence which those of the Church of Rome have to defend the putting them into the canon, as appears by Bellarmine and others. The book of

* Part. 3. Tit. 18. c. 6. sect. 2, et 3.

† Bur. in Addit. ad Lyram. ad c. 1. Esther. et 7.

‡ Tostat. in Matt. Præf. q. 1. 2. [fol. 1, 2. Venet. 1596.]

§ Xim. Præf. ad Bib. Comp.

Tobit, they tell us, is mentioned by St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, St. Basil, and St. Augustine. Of Judith, by St. Jerome, who mentions a tradition, that it was allowed in the Council of Nice; but certainly St. Jerome never believed it, when he declares it to be apocryphal, and not sufficient to prove any matter of faith. The Book of Wisdom, by St. Cyprian, St. Cyril, and St. Augustine. Ecclesiasticus, by Clemens Alexandrinus, St. Cyprian, Epiphanius, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine. The Maccabees, by Tertullian, Cyprian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Eusebius, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine. But all these testimonies only prove that they thought something in those books worth alleging, but not that they judged the books themselves canonical. And better arguments from their citations, might be brought for the books of the Sibyls, than for any of these. We are not then to judge of their opinion of canonical books by bare citations, but by their declared judgments about them.

2. The next step was, when they came to be read in churches; but about this, there was no certain rule. For the Councils of Laodicea and Carthage, differed chiefly upon this point. The former decreed, "that none but canonical Scripture should be read under the name of holy writings;" and sets down the names of the canonical books then to be read (and so leaves out the Apocalypse). The latter, from their being read, inferred their being canonical; for it agrees with the other, that none but canonical should be read, and because these were read, it reckons them up with the canonical books; for so the Canon concludes, "we have received from our fathers, that these books are to be read in churches."

But the Council of Carthage was not peremptory in this matter; but desired "it might be referred to Boniface, and other bishops beyond the seas:" which shews, that here was no decree absolutely made, nor any certainty of tradition; for then, to what purpose should they send to other churches to advise about it?

3. When they came to be distinguished from Apocryphal writings. Whence those who do not consider the reason of it, conclude them to have been Canonical. But sometimes Apocryphal signified such books as were not in the canon of faith, as in the authors before mentioned; sometimes such books which were not allowed to be used among Christians. This distinction we have in Ruffinus, who saith, there are three sorts of books; Canonical, as the twenty-two of the Old Testament;

Ecclesiastical, of which sort he reckons Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and Maccabees, and these, he saith, were permitted to be read in churches, but no argument could be brought out of them for matter of faith; Apocryphal are such, which by no means were permitted to be read. And thus Innocentius's words may well be understood: for he concludes with saying, "that other writings were not only to be rejected, but to be condemned." And so his meaning is to distinguish them from such counterfeit Divine writings as were then abroad. For these were not to be wholly rejected, and in that large sense he admits them into the canon, taking Ecclesiastical writings which were read in churches into that number. And in this sense St. Augustine used the word Apocryphal, when the Book of Enoch is so called by him,* and such other counterfeit writings under the names of the Prophets and Apostles; but elsewhere he distinguishes between the Canonical books of Solomon, and those which bare his name; which he saith, "the more learned know not to be his, but the Western Church had of old owned their authority." But in the case of the Book of Enoch, he appeals to the Canon, which was kept in the Jewish temple; and so falls in with St. Jerome; and he confesses it is hard to justify the authority of those which are not in the Hebrew Canon. Of the Maccabees he saith, "it is distinguished from the writings called Canonical; but it is received by the Church as such."† What! to confirm matters of faith? No, but for "the glorious sufferings therein recorded;" and elsewhere he saith,‡ "it is useful, if it be soberly read." St. Augustine knew very well, that all books were not received alike; and that many were received in some parts of the Western Church from the old translation out of the LXX. which were not received in the Eastern; and therefore, in his books of Christian Doctrine,§ he gives rules in judging of Canonical books; to follow the authority of the greatest number of catholic Churches, especially the Apostolical; and that those which were received by all, should be preferred before those which were only received by some. But he very well knew, that the Hebrew Canon was universally received, and that the controverted books were not; and therefore, ac-

* Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 15. c. 23. [vol. 7. p. 651. Par. 1838.] l. 17. c. 20. [Ibid. p. 763, 764.]

† Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 18. c. 36. [Ibid. p. 833.]

‡ C. Gaudent. c. 29. [Ibid. vol. 9. p. 1001.]

§ De Doctr. l. 3. c. 8. [Ibid. vol. 3. p. 86.]

ording to his rule, these could never be of equal authority with the other.

4. When the Roman Church declared that it received the controverted books into the Canon. This is said to have been done by Gelasius, with his Synod of seventy bishops (and yet it is hard to understand, how Gregory, so soon after, should contradict it). The title of it in the old MS. produced by Chiffletius, and by him attributed to Hormisdas, is, "The Order of the Old Testament which the holy Catholic Roman Church receives and honours, is this."* But whether by Gelasius or Hormisdas, I cannot understand, why such a decree as this should not be put into the old Roman Code of Canons, if it had been then made. That there was such a one, appears by the copies of it in the Vatican, mentioned by the Roman correctors of Gratian, and by mention of it by the canon *Si Romanorum*, Dist. 19, and *De Libellis*, Dist. 20; and by the latter, we understand what canons of Councils, and decrees of Popes are in it, among whom are both Gelasius and Hormisdas. This they agree to be the same with that published by Wendelstin at Mentz, 1525. The epistle of Innocentius to Exuperius, with the canon, is there published; but not the other; and so is the canon of the Council of Carthage; but that of Laodicea is cut off; and so they are in that published by Dionysius Exiguus, and Quesnell (Justellus's ancient copy was imperfect there), but both these canons being in the Roman Code, are an argument to me, that the controverted books were received by the Roman Church at that time; but in such a manner, that St. Jerome's prologues still stood in the vulgar Latin Bible, with the commentaries of Lyra, and additions of Burgensis, which were stiff for the Hebrew Canon; and St. Jerome's authority prevailed more than the Pope's, as appears fully by what hath been already produced.

5. To advance the authority of these books one step higher, Engenius IV. declared them to be part of the Canon in the instruction given to the Armenians. Which the Roman writers pretend to have been done in the Council of Florence; but Naclantus, bishop of Chioza, in the Council of Trent, as Pallavicini saith, "denied that any such decree was made by the Council of Florence,† because the last session of it ended 1439,

* Not. in Vigil. Taps. p. 150. [Div. 1664.]

† Hist. Concil. Trident. l. 6. c. 11. n. 12. [vol. 1. p. 577. Antv. 1670.]

and that decree was signed Feb. 4, 1441." To this the legate replied, "that this was a mistake occasioned by Abraham Crentensis, who published the Latin version of it, only till the Greeks' departure; but the Council continued three years longer, as appeared by the extracts of Augustinus Patritius," since published in the tomes of the Councils. But he never mentions the Canon of Scripture; however, because Cervinus affirms, that he saw the original signed by the Pope and Cardinals, we have no reason to dispute it. But then it appears how very little it signified, when Antoninus, the bishop of Florence, opposed it, and Cardinal Ximenes, and Cardinal Cajetan slighted it; and all who embraced the Council of Basil, looked on Eugenius's decree as void; and, after all, that very decree only joins the Apocryphal books in the same Canon as the Council of Carthage had done; but it was reserved as the peculiar honour of the Council of Trent, to declare that matters of faith might be proved out of them, as well as out of any Canonical Scriptures.

III. *About the free use of the Scripture in the vulgar language, prohibited by the Council of Trent.*

To understand the sense of the Council of Trent in this matter, we must consider,

1. That it declares the vulgar Latin to be authentic; *i. e.* that no man, under any pretence, shall dare to presume to reject it. Suppose the pretence be, that it differs from the original; no matter for that, he must not reject that which the Council hath declared authentic, *i. e.* among the Latin editions. But suppose a man finds other Latin translations truer in some parts, because they agree more with the original text, may he therein reject the vulgar Latin? By no means, if he thinks himself bound to adhere to the Council of Trent. But the Council supposes it to agree with the original. And we must believe the Council therein. This is indeed the meaning of the Council as far as I can judge. But what catholic tradition was there for this? Yes, for a thousand years after Gregory's time. But this is not antiquity enough to found a catholic tradition upon. If there were no more than a thousand from Gregory, there were six hundred past before him; so that there must be a more ancient tradition in the Church, wherein this version was not authentic; and how came it then to be authentic by virtue of tradition? Here then tradition must be given up; and the Council of Trent must have some other

ground to go upon. For I think the traditionary men will not maintain the vulgar Latin to have been always authentic.

2. That it referred the making the index of prohibited books to the Pope; and in the 4th rule of that index, "all persons are forbidden the use of the Scripture in the vulgar tongue, without a particular license, and whosoever presumes to do it without a faculty, unless he first gives up his Bible, he is not to receive absolution."

My business is now to inquire what catholic tradition the Pope and Council went upon in this prohibition. But as to the testimony of Fathers, I am prevented by some late discourses on this subject. Instead thereof, therefore, I shall,

1. Shew from their own writers, that there could be no catholic tradition for such a prohibition.

2. Prove the general consent of the catholic Church from public acts, as to the free use of the Scripture.

Thomas Aquinas grants, that the Scripture was proposed to all, and in such a manner, that the most rude might understand it.* Therefore there was no prohibition of such persons reading it.

Cajetan there uses two arguments for the Scriptures using metaphors and similitudes. 1. Because God provides for all; 2. Because the Scripture is tendered to all. And the common people are not capable of understanding spiritual things without such helps. If the Scripture were intended for all, how comes a prohibition of the use of it?

Sixtus Senensis† grants, that in former times the Scripture was translated into the vulgar languages, and the people did commonly read it, to their great benefit. Then a prohibition of it must alter the Church's practical tradition.

Alphonsus à Castro‡ yields to Erasmus, that the Scriptures were of old translated into the vulgar tongues, and that the Fathers, such as St. Chrysostom, and St. Jerome, persuaded people to the reading them. But the case is altered now, when such mischief comes by the reading the Scriptures. And yet the tradition of the Church continues the same, and is impossible to be changed.

Azorius§ puts the case fairly; he grants that the Scriptures

* Sum. 1. q. 1. a. 9. [ut supra, vol. 20. p. 6. col. 2.]

† Sixt. Senens. Biblioth. l. 6. n. 152. [p. 489. col. 2. Colon. 1586.]

‡ Alphons. à Castro, l. 1. c. 13. § Azor. Instit. Moral. l. 8. c. 26.

were at first written and published in the common language ; that St. Chrysostom admits all to read the Scriptures ; and that the people did so then ; but they do not now. But he saith the people then understood Greek and Latin, and now they do not. If it were their own language, they might well understand it ; but why should not the Scripture now be in a language they may understand ? For Greek and Latin did not make the common people one jot wiser or better ; and yet this man calls it a heresy now, to say the Scriptures ought to be translated into vulgar languages. How much is the faith of the Church changed ?

2. I am now to prove the general consent of the catholic Church in this matter from public acts, *i. e.* that all parts of it have agreed in translations of Scripture into vulgar languages, without any such prohibition.

If there had been any such thing in the Primitive Church, it would have held against the Latin translation itself. For I hope none will say it was the original, however authentic it be made by the Council of Trent. How then came the originals to be turned into the common language ? (as I suppose Latin will be allowed to have been the common language of the Roman empire.) There is no objection can now be made against any modern translations, but would have held against the first Latin version. Who the author of it was, is utterly unknown ; and both St. Augustine* and St. Jerome say, “there was a great variety among the old translations, and every one translated as he thought fit.” So that there was no restraint laid upon translating into the common language. And unless Latin were an infallible guide to those that understood it, the people were as liable to be deceived in it, as either in English or French.

But it was not only thus in the Roman empire, but wherever a people were converted to Christianity in all the elder times, the Scripture was turned into their language.† The ecclesiastical historians mention the conversion of the Goths, and upon that, the translation of the Bible into their language by Ulphilas, their bishop. Walafridus Strabo‡ adds to this,

* Aug. de Doct. Christian. l. 2. c. 11. [ut supra, vol. 3. p. 50.] Hier. Præf. in Josuam.

† Socr. l. 4. c. 33. Soz. l. 6. c. 37. Niceph. l. 11. c. 48. Isid. in Chron. Gothorum. [p. 274. col. 1. Colon. Agr. 1617.]

‡ Walaf. Strab. de Reb. Eccl. c. 7. [Apud Hittorp, De Divin. Eccl. Off. p. 667. Par. 1610.]

“that, besides the Bible, they had all public offices of religion performed in their own language.”

How soon the Churches in Persia were planted, it is impossible for us now to know; but in the MS. Ecclesiastical History of Abulpharagius (in the hands of Dr. Loftus), it is said, “that a disciple of Thaddæus preached the Gospel in Persia, Assyria, and the parts thereabouts; and that by another disciple of his, 360 churches were settled there in his time; and that he came to Seleucia, the metropolis of the Persians, and there established a church, where he continued fifteen years.” And from him there was a succession of the patriarchs of Seleucia, which continues still in the East; for upon the destruction thereof by Almansor, they removed first to Bagdad, and after that to Mozal over against Ninive, where their residence hath been since; and this patriarch had universal jurisdiction over the Eastern Churches, as far as the East Indies, as appears by Morinus’s Books of Ordinations in the East, and the proceedings with the Christians of St. Thomas in the very end of the last century.

But we are certain from the Greek historians, that in Constantine’s time the Christians in Persia were so numerous, that he wrote to the king of Persia on their behalf. Eusebius* saith, that Constantine was informed, “that the churches were much increased there, and great multitudes were brought into Christ’s flock;”† and Constantine himself, in his letter to Saporess, saith, “the Christians flourished in the best parts of Persia; and he hoped they might continue so to do.” But after Constantine’s death, a terrible persecution befel them, wherein, Sozomen saith,‡ “the names of 16,000 martyrs were preserved, besides an innumerable multitude of unknown persons.” The sharpest part of the persecution fell upon the bishops and presbyters; especially in Adiabene,§ which was almost wholly Christian, which Ammianus Marcellinus saith,|| “was the same with Assyria, wherein were Ninive, Ecbatane, Arbela, Gaugamela, Babylon (or Seleucia) and Ctesiphon,” of which Sozomen¶ saith Symeon was then archbishop. And he names above twenty bishops who suffered besides, and one Marcabdes a Chorepiscopus, with 250 of his clergy. After the time of Saporess, several sharp perse-

* Euseb. de Vit. Const. l. 4. c. 8. [Hist. Eccl. p. 530. Par. 1659.]

† C. 13. [Ibid. p. 532.]

‡ Soz. l. 2. c. 14.

§ C. 12.

|| Ammian. Marcell. l. 23. [vol. 1. p. 351. Bipont. 1786.]

¶ Soz. l. 2. c. 9.

cutions fell upon those churches in the times of Vararanes and Isdigerdes, of which the Greek historians take notice, and one of them, saith Theodoret,* lasted thirty years. This I mention, to shew what mean thoughts those have of the Catholic Church, who confine it to the Roman communion. Theodoret† and St. Chrysostom both affirm, “that the Persians had the Scriptures then in their own language;” and Sozomen saith, “that Symeon, archbishop of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, before his own martyrdom, encouraged the rest to suffer out of the holy Scripture;” which supposes them well acquainted with the language of it, and it is not very likely they should be either with the Hebrew, Greek, or Latin; but the other testimonies make it clear that it was in their own tongue.

The anonymous writer of St. Chrysostom’s‡ life, affirms, “that while he stayed in Armenia, he caused the New Testament to be translated into the Armenian tongue, for the benefit of those churches.” And this tradition is allowed by several learned men in the Church of Rome. But the Armenians themselves say,§ “the whole Bible was translated into the Armenian language by Moses Grammaticus, David, and Mampræus, three learned men of their own, in the time of their patriarch Isaac, about St. Chrysostom’s time.” Theodoret, in the place already cited, mentions the Armenian translation, as a thing well known; and he was near enough to understand the truth of it.

Jacobus de Vitriaco, a Roman Cardinal, saith, “that the Armenians, in his time, had the Scriptures read to them in their own language.”||

The Syriac version, for the use of those in the Eastern parts who understood not Hebrew or Greek, is allowed by all learned men to have been very ancient. I mean the old simple version out of the originals, and not that out of the LXX. of the Old Testament. As to the New, the tradition of the Eastern people is, “that it was done either in the Apostles’ times, or very near them.” Abraham Ecchellensis¶ shews, from the Syriac writers, that “the complete translation of the Bible was made in the time of Abgarus, king of Edessa,

* Theod. l. 5. c. 39.

† Theod. de Cur. Græc. affect. Serm. 5. p. 555. Serm. 9. p. 615. Chrys. in Joh. Hom. 2. p. 561. [vol. 8. p. 11. Par. 1836.]

‡ Vit. Chrys. c. 113. § Conc. Eccl. Armen. cum Rom. c. 7. p. 63.

|| Hist. Orient. c. 79. [p. 153. Duac. 1597.]

¶ Abr. Ecchell. not. in Ebed. Jesu. [p. 239. Rom. 1653.]

by the means of Thaddæus, and the other Apostles ;” and as to the time of Thaddæus, Gregorius Malatiensis* confirms it.

Postellus quotes an ancient tradition (which my adversaries ought to regard), “that St. Mark himself translated, not only his own Gospel, but all the books of the New Testament into the vulgar Syriac.” It is sufficient to my purpose, to shew that there was such an ancient translation ; which is owned by St. Chrysostom,† St. Ambrose,‡ St. Augustine,§ Diodorus|| and Theodoret :¶ which makes me wonder at Cardinal Bel- larmine’s affirming with so much confidence, that none of the Fathers speak of the Syriac version,** when Theodoret alone mentions it so often in his Commentaries.

Although the Greeks in Egypt might very well understand the Greek of the Old and New Testament (especially if that which is called the LXX. were done by the Alexan- drian Jews, as some imagine), yet those who knew no other than the old Egyptian language, could not make use of it. And therefore a Coptic translation was made for them ;†† which Kircher thinks to have been 1300 years old. And he withal observes, that their ancient Liturgies were in the Cop- tic language.

That it might not be suspected that Kircher imposed upon the world, he gives a particular account of the books he had seen in the Vatican library, and elsewhere, in the Coptic tongue. “The Pentateuch, in three tomes, distinguished into paragraphs by lines. The four Gospels, by themselves. St. Paul’s Epistles, and three canonical Epistles, with the Acts, in another volume. The Apocalypse by itself, and the Psalter. The Liturgy of St. Mark, with other daily prayers. The Liturgy of St. Gregory, with the prayers of St. Cyril, in the Coptic language ; and a Liturgy of St. Basil, with Gregory and Cyril, with several other rituals, missals, and prayers, all in the same tongue. All these,” he saith, “are in the Vatican library.” And in that of the Maronites’ college, he saith,‡‡ “is an old Coptic Martyrology, about 1300 years standing, by which he finds, that the chief employment of the old Egyp-

* Greg. Hist. Dynast. 6. † St. Chrysost. Hom. 2. in Joh. [ut supra.]

‡ Ambros. Hex. 1. c. 8.

§ Aug. de Civit. Dei, 1. 15. c. 13. [ut supra, vol. 7. p. 626.]

|| Diod. ad Gen. 27. 27.

¶ Theod. in Psal. 3. 4. in Psal. 103. 26. in Psal. 112. 1. in Psal. 115.

** De Verb. Dei, 1. 2. c. 4. [ut supra, p. 44. col. 1.]

†† Prodr. Copt. c. 8. [p. 186. Rom. 1636.] ‡‡ P. 186. [Ibid.]

tian monks, was to translate the Bible out of the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Greek, into the Coptic tongue,”

Morinus saith,* “that in the Oratorian library at Paris, they had the Coptic Gospels brought from Constantinople by Monsieur de Sancy.”

Petrus à Valle,† a nobleman of Rome, and a great traveller, saith, “he had several parts of Scripture in the Coptic language, which were turned into Arabic, when the old Coptic grew into disuse.”

Petræus had in the Eastern parts “a Coptic Psalter,‡ with an Arabic version, which he designed to publish.”

The Congregation *de propaganda Fide* at Rome, had several Coptic MSS. sent to them out of Egypt; among the rest, the Coptic Book of Ordination,§ translated and printed by Kircher; and since reprinted by Morinus.

Seguier, the late Chancellor of France, had, in his library, the consecration of a patriarch in Coptic and Arabic, “and several translations of the Bible, and prayers, in both languages.”

The Æthiopic translation|| bears date with the conversion of the nation, according to their own tradition, which some make to be in the Apostolical times, and others in the time of Constantine; and their public offices are performed in their own tongue. The Chancellor Seguier, had not only many parts of the Bible, but prayers and offices, in the Æthiopic tongue.

I shall add but one thing more to this purpose, which is taken from the want of antiquity in the Arabic versions; which is confessed by the learned critics on all sides. And even this tends to prove my design. For when the Saracen empire prevailed, the people grew more acquainted with the Arabic than with the ancient Syriac or Coptic; and therefore the Scripture was then translated into Arabic (as Vasæus saith it was done in Spain, after the Moors came thither, by a bishop of Seville); and this was the true reason why the Arabic versions have no greater antiquity. For Gabriel Sionita¶ observes, “that the Arabic is become the most vulgar language in the Eastern parts.” And because it was so in Syria

* Dissert. Epist. 13. † Epist. 14.

‡ Hottinger. Methurgem. p. 189.

§ De Ordin. Sacris, p. 504. Catal. MSS. p. 131.

|| Ludolph. Hist. Æthiop. l. 3. c. 4.

¶ Gabr. Sionita de Arab. c. 12. [c. 13.] [p. 62. Amst. 1635.]

as well as Egypt, there are different Arabic versions ; the one called *Codex Antiochenus*, and the other *Alexandrinus*.

Thus I have proved that there was a catholic tradition directly contrary to that established by order of the Council of Trent.

And now I proceed to give an account of the methods and steps by which this decree came to its ripeness.

1. The first step was the declension and corruption of the Latin tongue in the Western Church. It is observed by Polybius,* “that from the time of the first league between the Romans and the Carthaginians, the Latin tongue was so much changed, even in Rome itself, that very few could understand the words of it.” And Festus in *Latinè loqui* saith, “that the language was so altered, that scarce any part remained entire.” Scaliger thinks these words were added to Festus by Paulus Diaconus ; which seems much more probable, since he lived in the time of Charlemagne. At which time we may easily suppose the Latin tongue to have been very much corrupted by the writers, and not so easy to be understood anywhere by the common people in sudden discourse, as it had been before. Which appears evident by the Latin sermons made to the people in the several provinces in the Roman empire ; as in Africa by St. Augustine and Fulgentius ; in Italy by Petrus Chrysologus, Laurentius Novariensis, Gaudentius Brixiensis, Ennodius Ticinensis ; in Spain by Isidore, Ildephonsus, and others ; in Gaul by Cæsarius, Eucherius, Eligius, and several others, whose Latin sermons to the people are still extant. In the Council of Tours,† in the time of Charlemagne, particular care is taken “that the Homilies should be translated by their bishops either into the rustic Roman or the German, that the people might the easier understand them.” These Homilies were either those which Charlemagne caused to be taken out of the Fathers, and applied to the several Lessons through the year, as Sigebert observes,‡ or of their own composing ; however, they were to be turned by the bishops either into rustic Roman, or German, as served best to the capacities of the people. For the Franks then either retained the original German, or used the rustic Roman ; but this latter so much prevailed over the other, that in the solemn

* Polyb. 1. 3.

† Conc. Turon. 3. c. 17. [Labbe, Concil. vol. 7. p. 1263. Lut. Par. 1671.]

‡ Sigeb. ad An. 807. [p. 61. Par. 1513.]

oaths between Lewis and Charles, upon parting the dominions of France and Germany, set down in Nithardus,* the rustic Roman was become the vulgar language of France, and these were but the grandchildren of Charlemagne. Marquardus Freherus† thinks that only the princes and great men retained the German, but the generality then spoke the rustic Roman; as appears by the oath of the people; which begins thus:

Si Lodwigs Sacrament que Son Fradre Carlo jurat conservat,‡ et Carlus meo Sendra de suo part non lo stanit, si jo returnar non lint pois, ne io, ne veuls cui eo returnar int pois, in nulla ajudha contra Lodwig non li iver.

By which we may see what a mixture of Latin there was in the vulgar language then used by the Franks, and how easy it was for the people then to understand the public Offices being constant; but the sermons not being so, there was greater necessity to turn them into that corrupt or rustic Roman, which was thoroughly understood by them. In Spain the Latin was less corrupted before the Gothic and Arabic, or Moorish words were taken into it. Lucius Marineus§ saith, “that had it not been for the mixture of those words, the Spaniards had spoken as good Latin as the Romans did in the time of Tully;” and he saith, “that to his time he had seen epistles written in Spanish, wherein all the nouns and verbs were good Latin.” In Italy the affinity of the vulgar prevailing language and the Latin continued so great, that the difference seemed for some hundred years, no more than of the learned and common Greek, or of the English and Scotch; and so no necessity was then apprehended of translating the correct tongue into a corrupt dialect of it.

But where there was a plain difference of language, there was some care even then taken, that the people might understand what they heard, as appears by these things,

1. Alcuinus|| gives an account why one day was called *Sabbatum in 12 Lectionibus*, when there were but six lessons, and he saith, “it was because they were read both in

* Nithard. l. 3. [Du Chesne, Hist. Franc. Scriptor. vol. 2. p. 374. Lut. Par. 1636.]

† Freher. in Exposit. Fœderis inter Lud. et Car.

‡ V. Capitul. Caroli Calvi. Tit. 8. [p. 76, 77. Par. 1623.]

§ Marineus Sicul. de Rebus Hisp. l. 5. c. 4.

|| Alcuin, de Divin. Offic. c. 29. [Apud Hittorp. De Divin. Cathol. Eccles. Officiis, p. 265. Par. 1610.]

Greek and Latin, they not understanding each other's languages." Not because the Greek was a holy tongue, but *quia aderant Græci, quibus ignota erat lingua Latina*; which shews that the Church then thought it a reasonable cause to have the Scripture in such a language, which might be understood by the people. The same reason is given by Amalarius.*

2. In the German churches there were ancient translations of Scripture into their own language. B. Rhenanus† attributes a translation of the Gospels, to Waldo, bishop of Freising, "as soon as the Franks received Christianity;" and he saith, "it was the immortal honour of the Franks, to have the Scripture so soon translated into their own language; which," saith he, "is of late opposed by some divines:" so little did he know of an universal tradition against it. Goldastus mentions the translation in rhyme by Ottofridus Wissenburgensis,‡ published by Achilles Gassarus, the Psalter of Notkerus, Rudolphus ab Eems's Paraphrase of the Old Testament. Andreas du Chesne hath published a preface before an old Saxon book,§ wherein it is said, "that Ludovicus Pius did take care that all the people should read the Scripture in their own tongue, and gave it in charge to a Saxon to translate both Old and New Testament into the German language; which," saith he, "was performed very elegantly."

3. In the Saxon churches here, it was not to be expected that the Scripture should be translated, till there were persons learned both in the Saxon, and the other languages. Bede, in his Epistle to Egbert, puts him upon instructing the common people in their own language, especially in the Creed and Lord's prayer; and to further so good a work, Bede|| himself translated the Gospel of St. John into the Saxon tongue, as Cuthbert saith in the epistle about his death, in the Life of Bede, before his Saxon history. It appears by the old canons of churches, and the epistles of Ælfrie, saith Mr. Lisle, "that there was an old Saxon¶ canon for the priest to say unto the people, the sense of the Gospel, in English;" and Ælfrie saith of himself, "that he had translated the Pentateuch, and some of the historical books." The New Testament was translated

* Amalar. de Offic. l. 2. c. 1. [Ibid. p. 373.]

† Rhenan. Rer. German. p. 112. [p. 201. Argent. 1610.]

‡ Rer. Alem. to. 1. p. 120. to. 2. p. 119. [vol. 1. p. 198, 393. Franc. 1606.]

§ Hist. Franc. to. 2. p. 326. [Lut. Par. 1636.]

|| Bed. Epist. ad Egbert. p. 65.

¶ Saxon Treatise of the Old and New Testament.

by several hands ; and an ancient Saxon translation hath been lately published with the Gothic Gospels. And there were old Saxon Glosses upon the Gospels ; of Aldred, Farnen, and Owen. The last work of King Alfred was the translating the Psalter ; and if the MS. history of Ely deserves credit, he translated both the Old and New Testament.

4. It is not denied either by Bellarmine* or Baronius,† “ that the Slavonians in the ninth century had a permission upon their conversion to Christianity, to enjoy the Bible, and to have public offices performed in their own language.” But they tell us, “ it was because they were then children in the faith, and to be indulged (but methinks children were the most in danger to be seduced) ; or there were not priests enough to officiate in Latin at first :” but this was no reason then given, as appears by the Pope’s own letter published by Baronius, wherein he “ gives God thanks for the invention of letters among them by Constantine a philosopher :” and he expressly saith, “ that God had not confined his honour to three languages, but all people and languages were to praise him ;” and he saith, “ God himself in Scripture had so commanded ; and he quotes St. Paul’s words for it.” One would wonder those great men should no better consider the Pope’s own reasons ; but give others for him, which he never thought of. “ It is true,” he adds, “ that he would have the Gospel read first in Latin, and then in Slavonian, and if they pleased, he would have the mass said in Latin ;” but the Slavonians continued their custom, and the Pope was willing enough to let them enjoy it, for his own convenience as well as theirs. For there was a secret in this matter, which is not fully understood.

Aventinus‡ saith, that Methodius invented their letters, and translated the Scriptures into the Slavonian tongue, and persuaded the people to reject the Latin service ; but this I see no ground for. But the truth of the matter was, the Slavonians were converted by the means of Methodius and Cyril (otherwise called Constantine), two Greek bishops, and the Christian religion was settled among them by their means, and they translated the Scriptures and offices of worship into their own language. The Pope had not forgotten the business of the Bulgarians, and he could not tell but this might end in

* Bell. de Verbo Dei, l. 2.

† Bar. ad An. 880. n. 16.

‡ Aventin. Annal. l. 4. p. 434. [Ingolst. 1554.]

subjection to another patriarchal see ; and therefore he endeavours to get Methodius and Cyril to Rome, and having gained them, he sends a sweetening letter to the prince, and makes the concession before mentioned. For he could not but remember how very lately the Greeks had gained the Bulgarians from him ;* and lest the Slavonians should follow them, he was content to let them have what they desired, and had already established among themselves without his permission. All this appears from the account of this matter given by Constantinus Porphyrogenetus, compared with Diocleas's *Regnum Slavorum*, and Lucius's Dalmatian History.

It is sufficient for my purpose, that Diocleas owns that Constantine (to whom Andreas Dandalus, duke of Venice, in his MS. history cited by Lucius,† saith, the Pope gave the name of Cyril), did translate the Bible into the Slavonian tongue, for the benefit of the people, and the public offices out of Greek, according to their custom. And the Chancellor Seguier had in his library both the New Testament and Liturgies, in the Slavonian language,‡ and in Cyril's character ; and many of the Greek Fathers' commentaries on Scripture in that tongue, but not one of the Latin.

2. The next step was, when Gregory VII.§ prohibited the translation of the Latin offices in the Slavonian tongue. And this he did to the King of Bohemia himself, after a peremptory manner ; but he saith, it was the request of the nobility, that they might have divine offices in the Slavonian tongue, which he could by no means yield to. What was the matter ? How comes the case to be so much altered from what it was in his predecessor's time ? The true reason was, the Bohemian churches were then brought into greater subjection to the Roman see, after the consecration of Dithmarus Saxo to be their archbishop ; and now they must own their subjection, as the Roman provinces were wont to do, by receiving the language. But as his predecessor had found Scripture for it, so Gregory pretends he had found reason against it, *viz.* "The Scripture was obscure, and apt to be misunderstood and despised." What ! more than in the time of Methodius and Cyril ? If they pleaded primitive practice, he plainly answers, "that the Church is grown wiser, and hath corrected many

* Bar. A. 869. n. 80.

† Luci. de Regno Dalmatiæ, l. 2. c. 3. [p. 67. Amst. 1668.]

‡ Catal. MSS. p. 33, 34.

§ Greg. Regist. l. 7. Ep. 11.

things that were then allowed.”* This is indeed to the purpose; and therefore by the authority of St. Peter, he forbids him to suffer any such thing, and charges him to oppose it with all his might.

But after all, it is entered in the Canon Law *De Officio Jud. Ord.* l. 1. *Tit.* 31. c. *Quoniam*, as a decree of Innocent III. in the Lateran Council, that where there were people of different languages, the bishop was to provide persons fit to officiate in those several languages. Why so? If there were a prohibition of using any but the Latin tongue. But this was for the Greeks, and theirs was a holy tongue. That is not said; nor if it were, would it signify any thing; for doth any imaginary holiness of the tongue sanctify ignorant devotion? But the canon supposes them to have the same faith. Then the meaning is, that no man must examine his religion by the Scripture, but if he resolves beforehand to believe as the Church believes, then he may have the Scriptures, or prayers, in what language he pleases. But even this is not permitted in the Roman Church. For,

3. After the Inquisition was set up by the authority of Innocent III. in the Lateran Council, no lay persons were permitted to have the books of the Old and New Testament, but the Psalter, or Breviary, or Hours, they might have; but by no means in the vulgar language. This is called by D’Achery and Labbe† the Council of Toulouse, but in truth it was nothing else but an order of the Inquisition, as will appear to any one that reads it. And the Inquisition ought to have the honour of it, both in France and Spain. Which prohibition hath been so grateful to some divines of the Church of Rome, that Cochläus‡ calls it pious, just, reasonable, wholesome and necessary; Andradius§ thinks the taking of it away would be destructive to faith; Ledesma saith,|| the true Catholics do not desire it, and bad ought not to be gratified with it. Petrus Sutor,¶ a Carthusian doctor, calls the translating Scripture into the vulgar languages, a rash, useless, and dangerous

* Cùm primitiva Ecclesia multa dissimulaverit quæ à sanctis Patribus postmodum firmata Christianitate, et Religione crescente, subtili examinatione correctæ sunt.

† Labb. Concil. to. 11. p. 427. [Lut. Par. 1672.]

‡ Cochl. c. Alex. Alesium. A.D. 1533.

§ Andrad. Defens. Concil. Trident. l. 4.

|| Ledesma de Div. Script. quavis lingua non leg. p. 155. [Colon. 1574. not paged.]

¶ Pet. Sutor de Tralatione Bibliæ, p. 99. p. 96. [Par. 1525.]

thing; and he gives the true reason of it, *viz.* "that the people will be apt to murmur when they see things required as from the Apostles, which they cannot find a word of in Scripture." And when all is said on this subject that can be, by men of more art, this is the plainest and honestest reason for such a prohibition; but I hope I have made it appear it is not built on any catholic tradition.

IV. *Of the Merit of Good Works.*

The Council of Trent, Sess. 6. c. 16, declares, that the good works of justified persons do truly deserve eternal life; and can. 32, an anathema is denounced against him that denies them to be meritorious, or that a justified person by them doth not truly merit increase of grace, and happiness, and eternal life.

The Council hath not thought fit to declare what it means by truly meriting; but certainly it must be opposed to an improper kind of meriting, and what that is, we must learn from the divines of the Church of Rome.

1. Some say, that some of the Fathers speak of an improper kind of merit, which is no more than the due means for the attaining of happiness as the end. So Vega* confesses they often use the word merit, where there is no reason for merit, either by way of congruity or condignity. Therefore, where there is true merit, there must be a proper reason for it. And the Council of Trent being designed to condemn some prevailing opinions at that time, among those they called heretics, this assertion of true merit must be levelled against some doctrine of theirs; but they held good works to be necessary as means to an end, and therefore this could not be the meaning of the Council.

Suarez saith,† "the words of the Council ought to be specially observed, which are, that there is nothing wanting in the good works of justified persons, *ut vere promeruisse censeantur*; and therefore no metaphorical or improper, but that which by the sense of the Church of Rome was accounted true merit, in opposition to what was said by those accounted heretics, must be understood thereby."

2. Others say, that a mere congruity arising from the promise and favour of God, in rewarding the acts of his grace in justified persons, cannot be the proper merit intended by the Council. And that for these reasons.

* Vega de Justif. l. 8. c. 8. [p. 188. Colon. 1572.]

† Suarez de Grat. l. 12. c. 1. n. 8. [vol. 8. p. 393. col. 1. Venet. 1741.]

Suarez observes,* that although the Council avoids the terms *ex condigno*, yet because it still uses the words *vere mereri*, it implies something more than mere congruity; and because it speaks of meriting the increase of grace, and not the first grace; now a congruity is allowed for the first grace, which it excludes by mentioning the increase. And withal, it brings places to prove that the giving the reward must be a retribution of justice, and if so, the merit must be more than that of congruity.

2. Because God's promise doth not give any intrinsic value to the nature of the act; no more than his threatening doth increase the nature of guilt. If the King of Persia had promised a province to him that gave him a draught of water, the act itself had been no more meritorious; but it only shewed the munificence of the prince; no more do God's promises of eternal life add any merit to the acts of grace, but only set forth the infinite bounty of the Promiser.

3. In the conference at Ratisbon (the year this decree passed by the Emperor's order), the Protestant party did yield,† that by virtue of God's promise, the reward of eternal life was due to justified persons; as a father promising a great reward to his son for his pains in studying, makes it become due to him, although there be no proportion between them. And if no more were meant by merit of congruity, than that it was very agreeable to the Divine nature to reward the acts of his own grace, with an infinite reward, they would yield this too.

4. Cardinal Pallavicini gives us the plain and true meaning of the Council,‡ *viz.* "that a merit *de congruo* was allowed for works before justification; but for works after, they all agreed," he saith, "that there was a merit *de condigno* in them, both for increase of grace, and eternal glory." By merit *de condigno*, is meant such an intrinsic value in the nature of the act, as makes the reward in justice to be due to it.

Some call one of these, *meritum secundum quid*;§ which is the same with *de congruo*; which really deserves no reward,

* Suarez de Grat. l. 12. c. 1. n. 12. [Ibid. p. 394. col. 1.]

† Disputat. Ratisbonæ, An. 1546. p. 568.

‡ Hist. Conc. Trid. l. 8. c. 4. n. 4. [vol. 1. p. 719. Antv. 1670.]

§ Rich. de Media Vill. in l. 2. Sent. Dist. 17. [Dist. 27.] art. 2. q. 1. [fol. 114. p. 2. col. 1. Venet. 1509.] Nich. de Orbellis in 3. [2.] l. Sent. Dist. 27. [Hagen. 1503. not paged.]

but receives it only from the liberality of the giver; and this hath not truly, say they, the notion of merit; but that which makes the reward due, is simple and true merit, when it doth not come merely from the kindness of the giver, but from respect to the worthiness of the action and the doer, and this is *de condigno*.

Let us now see what catholic tradition there was for this doctrine, and whether this were taught them by their Fathers in a continued succession down from the Apostles' times.

But that there was a change as to the sense of the Church in this matter, I shall prove in the first place from an office which was allowed in the Church before, and forbidden after. It was an office with respect to dying persons, wherein are these questions.

"Q. Dost thou believe that thou shalt come to heaven, not by thy own merits, but by the virtue and merit of Christ's passion?*

"A. I do believe it.†

"Q. Dost thou believe that Christ died for our salvation, and that none can be saved by their own merits, or any other way but by the merits of his passion?‡

"A. I do believe it."§

Now when the *Indices Expurgatorii* were made in pursuance to the order of the Council of Trent, this passage was no longer endured. For, in the Roman Index, the *Ordo baptizandi*, wherein this question was, is forbidden till it were corrected. But the Spanish Indices explain the mystery; that of Cardinal Quiroga saith expressly, "those questions and answers must be blotted out;" and the like we find in the Index of Soto Major and Sandoval. What now is the reason that such questions and answers were no longer permitted, if the Church's tradition continued still the same? Was not this a way to know the tradition of the Church by the offices used in it? This was no private office then first used, but although the prohibition mentions one impression at Venice (as though there had been no more), I have one before me, printed by Gryphius at Venice two years before that; and long before with the *Preceptorium* of Lyra, A.D. 1495, where the question to the dying

* Credis non propriis meritis, sed passionis Domini nostri Jesu Christi virtute et merito ad gloriam pervenire? [Ind. Libr. Prohib. p. 816, 817. Madrit. 1667.] † Credo.

‡ Credis quod Dominus noster Jesus Christus pro nostra Salute mortuus sit; et quod ex propriis meritis, vel alio modo nullus possit salvari nisi in merito passionis ejus? [Ibid. p. 817.] § Credo.

person is in these words, "*Si credit se merito passionis Christi et non propriis ad gloriam pervenire? Et respondeat, Credo.*" And the same questions and answers I have in a *Sacerdotale Romanum*, printed by Nicolinus at Venice, 1585. Cardinal Hosius* says, that he had seen these questions and answers in the *Sacerdotale Romanum*, and in the *Hortulus Animæ*; and that they were believed to be first prescribed by Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury. On what account now, come these things to be prohibited and expunged, if the Church's doctrine and tradition about this matter be still the very same? No doubt it was believed that the Council of Trent had now so far declared the sense of the Church another way, that such questions and answers were no longer to be endured.

But before the Council of Trent, the canons of Colen,† against Hermannus, their bishop, when he published his Reformation, declare, that God's giving eternal life upon good works, is *ex gratuita dignatione suæ clementiæ*, from the favour which God vouchsafes to them. Which, to my apprehension, is inconsistent with the notion of true merit in the works themselves; for if there be any condignity in them, it cannot be mere grace and favour in God to reward them.

The same canons in their Enchiridion,‡ some years before, when they joined with their bishop, call it stupidity to think that good works are rewarded with eternal life for any dignity in the works themselves. And if there be no dignity in them, there can be no true merit; as the Council of Trent determines with an anathema.

Pope Adrian VI.§ gives such an account of the merit of our works, that he could never imagine any condignity in them to eternal life. For, saith he, "our merits are a broken reed, which pierce the hand of him that leans upon them; they are a menstruous cloth, and our best actions mixed with impurities; and when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants."

Petrus de Alliaco,|| cardinal of Cambray, attributes no other effect to good works, than of a *causa sine qua non*; and saith, "that the reward is not to be attributed to any virtue in

* Hos. Confess. Petricovi, c. 73. p. 144.

† Antididagma Colon. f. 16. 2. [Colon. 1544.]

‡ Enchirid. Colon. f. 176. 2. [Colon. 1537.]

§ Adrian. de Sacr. Euchar. f. 61.

|| Pet. de Alliaco, in 4. l. Sent. q. 1. art. 1. f. 225. c. [Par. no date.]

them, but to the will of the giver." Which I think overthrows any true merit.

Gabriel Biel* attributes the merit of good works, not to any intrinsic goodness in them, but to God's acceptance. Which is in words to assert merit, and in truth to deny it; for, how can there be true merit in the works, if all their value depends upon Divine acceptance?

Thomas Walden† charges Wickliffe with asserting the doctrine of merit, and encouraging men to trust in their own righteousness, and he quotes Scriptures and Fathers against it; and he blames the use of the term of merit, either *ex congruo*, *ex condigno*; which, he saith, was an invention of some late Schoolmen, and was contrary to the ancient doctrine of the Church. As he proves, not only from Scripture and Fathers, but from the ancient offices too; as in the Canon of the Mass, *Non æstimator meriti, sed veniæ quæsumus, largitor, &c.* Fer. 4. Pass. *Ut qui de meritorum qualitate diffidimus, non judicium tuum sed misericordiam consequamur.* Dom. 2. Adv. *Ubi nulla suppetunt suffragia meritorum, tuæ nobis indulgentiæ succurre præsidis.* How comes the doctrine, condemned in Wickliffe, to be established in the Council of Trent? For he was blamed for asserting true merit, and the Council asserts it with an anathema to those that deny it. And yet we must believe the very same tradition to have been in the Church all this while.

Vega saith,‡ that Walden speaks against merits without grace; but any one that reads him, will find it otherwise. For he produces those passages out of the Fathers against merits, which do suppose Divine grace, as it were easy to shew; but Friar Walden thought the notion of merit inconsistent with the power and influence of Divine grace necessary to our best actions. "God," saith he, "doth not regard merit either as to congruity or condignity, but his own grace, and will, and mercy."

Marsilius de Ingen,§ who lived before Walden, reckons up three opinions about merit; the first, of those who denied it, and of this, saith he, Durandus seems to be, and one Joh. de Everbaco. The second, of those who said that our works have no merit of themselves, but as informed by Divine grace,

* Biel. in l. 2. Sent. Diss. 27. art. 1. not. 3. [Basil. 1512. not paged.]

† Walden de Sacram. Tit. 1. c. 7. ‡ Vega in Opusc. Qu. 4.

§ Marsil. in l. 2. Sent. q. 18. [art. 4. fol. ccc. p. 1. col. 2. Argent. 1501.]

and from the assistance of the Holy Ghost, so they do truly merit eternal life ; and of this opinion, he saith, was Thomas de Argentina. The third was, of those who granted that true merit doth imply an equality, but then they distinguish equality as to quantity, and as to proportion ; and in this latter sense, they asserted an equality. And of this opinion, he saith, was Petrus de Tarantasia. But he delivers his own judgment in these conclusions.

1. That our works either considered in themselves, or with Divine grace, are not meritorious of eternal life *ex condigno*, which he proves both from Scripture and reason, *viz.* because, 1. No man can make God a debtor to him ; for the more grace he hath, the more he is a debtor to God. And, 2. He cannot merit of another by what he receives from him. And, 3. No man can pay what he owes to God, and therefore can never merit at his hands. 4. No man can merit here so much grace, as to keep him from falling away from grace ; much less then eternal life.

2. These works may be said to be meritorious of eternal life *ex condigno*, by Divine acceptation originally proceeding from the merit of Christ's passion, because that makes them worthy. But this is Christ's merit, and not the true merit of our works.

3. Works done by grace, do merit eternal life *de congruo* from God's liberal disposition, whereby he hath appointed so to reward them : it being agreeable to him to give glory to them that love him. But this is an improper kind of merit, and can by no means support the tradition of true merit.

Durandus* utterly denies any true merit of man towards God ; he doth not deny it in a large improper sense for such a condignity in our actions as God hath appointed in order to a reward ; which is by the grace of God in us : but as it is taken for a free action to which a reward is in justice due ; because whatever we do is more owing to the grace of God, than to ourselves ; but to make a debtor to us, we must not only pay an equivalent to what we owe, but we must go beyond it ; but to God and our parents, we can never pay an equivalent, much less exceed it.† And we can never merit by what God gives us, because the gift lays a greater obligation upon us. And he saith, the holding the contrary, is temerarious and blasphemous.

* Durand. in Sent. 1. 2. Dist. 27. q. 2. [fol. cc. p. 1. Par. 1508.]

† N. 14. [Ibid.]

The two grounds of holding merit were, the supposing a proportion between grace and glory, and an equality between Divine grace and glory in virtue, grace being as the seed of glory ; and to both these he answers.

To the first, That the giving a reward upon merit is no part of distributive, but commutative justice, because it respects the relation of one thing to another, and not the mere quality of the person.

To the second, That the value of an act is not considered with respect to the first mover, but to the immediate agent : and as to grace being the seed of glory, it is but a metaphorical expression, and nothing can be drawn from it. So that Durandus concludes true merit with respect to God to be temerarious, blasphemous, and impossible.

Ockam declares,* that after all our good works, God may, without injustice, deny eternal life to them who do them ; because God can be debtor to none ; and therefore whatever he doth to us, it is out of mere grace. And that there can be nothing meritorious in any act of ours, but from the grace of God freely accepting it. And therefore he must deny any true merit.

Gregorius Ariminensis saith,† that no act of ours, though coming from grace to never so great a degree, is meritorious with God *ex condigno* of any reward, either temporal or eternal ; because every such act is a gift of God ; and if it were at all meritorious, yet not as to eternal life, because there is no equivalency between them, and therefore it cannot in justice be due to it ; and consequently if God gives it, he must do it freely. But, saith he, God is said to be just when he gives *bona pro bonis*, and merciful when he gives *bona pro malis* ; not but that he is merciful in both, but because his mercy appears more in the latter, and in the other, it seems like justice in a general sense from the conformity of the merit and the reward ; but in this particular retribution it is mere mercy.

Scotus affirms,‡ that all the meritoriousness of our acts depends on Divine acceptation in order to a reward ; and if it did depend on the intrinsic worth of the acts, God could not in

* Ockam in 4. Sent. q. 3. ad secundum. In 1. 1. Dist. 17. q. 1. in 1. 1. Dist. 17. q. 2.

† Greg. Arim. in 1. 1. Sent. Dist. 17 art. 2.

‡ Scot. in 1. 1. Sent. Dist. 17. q. 3. n. 24. [Oper. vol. 5. p. 964. Lugd. 1639.]

justice deny the reward, which is false ; and therefore it wholly depends on the good will and favour of God.

Bellarmino* is aware of this, and he confesses this to be the opinion of Scotus, and of other old schoolmen. But how then do they hold the doctrine and tradition of true merit? He holds, that good works are properly and truly good. So do we, and yet deny merit. But he grants, that he denies that they bear any proportion to eternal life; and therefore they cannot be truly meritorious of it. Bellarmine himself asserts, that without the Divine promise, good works have a proportion to eternal life, and this he saw was necessary to defend the doctrine of the Council of Trent; but then he adds, that there is no obligation on God's part, to reward in such a manner, without a promise. Now here are two hard points: 1. To make it appear that there is such a meritoriousness in good works, without a Divine promise. 2. That if there were so, there is no obligation on God to reward such acts in point of justice. The former is so much harder to do from what he had proved before, ch. xiv. *viz.* "that they are not meritorious without a promise;" and here he proves that they have no proportion to the reward, from Scripture, Fathers, and reason; because there is no obligation on God to do it, either from commutative or distributive justice; and because we are God's servants. These are good arguments against himself; for how can such acts then become meritorious without a promise? If there be no proportion or equality on man's part, no justice on God's part to reward, how can they possibly be meritorious? But this is too deep for me to comprehend. My business is tradition, and I have evidently proved that there was no tradition even in the Church of Rome for the true merit defined by the Council of Trent. It were easy to carry this point higher, by shewing that the Fathers knew nothing of this doctrine, but that hath been done by many already, and it is needless in so plain a case.

But I am now to give an account by what steps and occasions this doctrine came to be established.

1. From the common use of the word merit with the Fathers and others, in another sense than it signified at first.† The original signification of it is wages paid in consideration of service; and from thence soldiers were said *merere* (as Budæus

* Bell. de Just. l. 5. c. 17. [vol. 4. p. 580. Prag. 1721.]

† Jos. Scalig. in Varr. de L. L. p. 172. Bud. in Pandect. p. 362. Plin. Ep. l. 1. 8.

observes, and then comes the word *merces*), who truly deserved their pay by their labour and hazard ; but by degrees it came to signify no more than merely to attain a thing ; which is sometimes used by good authors ; but in the declension of the Latin tongue, no sense of this word was more common than this, especially among ecclesiastical writers. Who frequently used it in a sense wherein it was impossible to understand it in its original signification ; and it cannot imply so much as *digne consequi*, as in the instance brought by Cassander ;* when St. Cyprian renders those words of St. Paul, *Misericordiam merui*, which we render, “ I obtained mercy ;” but the Council of Trent allows there could be no true merit here. And St. Augustine† saith of those who murdered the Son of God, *Illi veniam meruerunt qui Christum occiderunt*. And so the vulgar Latin often uses it, Gen. iv. 13, *major est iniquitas mea quam ut veniam merear*. Jos. xi. 20, *et non mererentur ullam clementiam*. And in that sense it hath been used in the Hymns and other offices of the Church, as in that expression, *O felix culpa quæ talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem !* Where it cannot be denied that the word is used in an improper sense.

2. When the School divines set themselves to explain the mysteries of theology, this plain and easy, but improper sense of merit, would not go down with some of them ; but they endeavoured to make out the notion of merit with respect to God, in its proper and original sense. The last considerable writer, before the scholastic age, was St. Bernard, and he pretended not to find out any such proportion between the best works and eternal life, “ that God should be bound in justice to bestow it as a recompense for them :”‡ and the reason he gives is plain and strong, “ because those things men pretend to merit by, are themselves the gifts of God’s grace, and so by them they are more bound to God than God to them,” but besides, “ what are all men’s merits to eternal glory ?” St. Bernard doth not speak of merits without grace, but with the supposition of it ; and Bellarmine wisely left out the latter part, that he might seem to answer the former.

* Cassand. in Hymn. Eccl. p. 179. [Par. 1616.]

† Aug. in Joh. Tr. 31. n. 9. [vol. 3. p. 2021. Par. 1836.]

‡ Neque enim talia sunt hominum merita, ut propter ea vita æterna deberetur ex jure, aut Deus injuriam aliquam faceret, nisi eam donaret. Nam ut taceam quod merita omnia Dona Dei sunt, et ita homo magis propter ipsa Deo debitor est, quam Deus homini, quid sunt merita omnia ad tantam gloriam ? Bernard. Serm. 1. de Annun. Bellarm. de Justif. l. 5. c. 6. [ut supra, p. 563. col. 2.]

Hugo de Sancto Victore* lived in the same age, who first shewed the way to school divinity, and upon the same place which St. Bernard speaks of, *Non sunt condignæ*, &c. he puts the question, how any temporal acts can merit that which is eternal? And he denies any condignity, because there is more in the reward, than there was in the merit; but then he adds, that there may be a threefold comparison of things; either as to themselves, as a horse for a horse, money for money, or according to equity, either in punishments or rewards; or by pact or agreement, as when a good sum is promised for a little work; “and this,” saith he, “God hath made known to mankind, as to future rewards and punishments.” Which plainly shews he understood nothing of the proportion between acts of grace, and an eternal happiness; but resolved all into the favour and mercy of God.

Peter Lombard,† called the Master of the Sentences, saith, “Nothing of any condignity or proportion is in our works to the reward; but,” he saith, “they are themselves God’s gifts, and that the reward itself is from the grace of God,” and quotes the noted saying of St. Augustine, “*Cum coronat Deus merita nostra, nihil aliud coronat quàm dona sua.*” But still this is nothing but grace and favour in God, first in enabling us to do good works, and then in rewarding them.

Bandinas wrote a book of the Sentences much about the time Peter Lombard did, with so much agreement of method and expressions, that it is not known which took from the other. Genebrard‡ hath produced this passage out of him, “*Debet, inciviliter de Deo dicitur, quia nihil omnino nobis debet, nisi ex promisso.*” If it be so rude to say, “God owes any thing to his creatures but by promise,” he could not imagine any condignity in good works, to which a reward is due in justice. And Genebrard thinks he had reason to deny, “that God can be made a debtor to us by any of our works.”

Robertus Pullus,§ who wrote another book of the Sentences about the same time, mentioning that place, *Non sunt condignæ*, &c. he saith, “because our works are not sufficient, being small and temporal, God by his mercy makes it up;” which not only shews that God doth reward beyond our merit, but

* Hugo de S. Vict. Annot. Elucidator. in Rom.

† Lomb. Sent. l. 2. Dist. 27. [fol. 201. p. 2. Colon. Agr. 1576.]

‡ Genebrard. de Trinit. l. 3. p. 312.

§ Pull. Sentent. Part. 1. c. 13.

that there is no proportion between the best works and eternal glory.

But by the time of Gulielmus Antissiodorensis,* there were two parties in the Church about this point; "some," he saith, "denied any merit of eternal life, *ex condigno*, and others asserted it;" and after laying down the arguments on both sides, he concludes for the affirmative; but in answer to the place, *non sunt condignæ, etc.* he saith, "they are not *ad proportion-aliter merendum*, but they are *ad simpliciter merendum*;" so that still he denied any proportion, though he held simple merit.

But Thomas Aquinas coming after him,† denies that there can be any simple merit with respect to God, because that cannot be where there is so great inequality; and so there can be no equal justice between them, but according to a proportion; which he afterwards explains, *viz.* as to the substance and freedom of our good works there is only a congruity; but as they proceed from Divine grace, so they are meritorious of eternal life, *ex condigno*.‡

This doctrine had some followers in the schools, but not many in comparison of those who opposed it, as appears by what is said already.

Richardus de Mediavilla,§ though a Franciscan, follows herein the doctrine of Aquinas, and asserts, that by acts of free will, informed by grace, a man may merit eternal life *ex condigno*, and he adds somewhat more, *potest certissimè*; and he uses the same answers to the objections which the other did.

And Nich. de Orbellis|| follows Richardus, so that Aquinas's doctrine had prevailed beyond his own school.

But it was as vehemently opposed by others of that fraternity, among whom Cardinal Hosius¶ mentions Stephanus Brulifer, who maintained, "that no act of grace, how good soever, was worthy of eternal life."

Paulus Burgensis,** though he is said to have been converted from being a Jew by reading Aquinas, yet utterly dissented from him in this matter: for he saith, "that no man can, by

* Guliel. Antis. l. 3. tr. 12. q. 2. de Merito Virt. [fol. 200. Par. 1500.]

† 1. 2. q. 114. art. 1. [vol. 21. p. 528. col. 1. Venet. 1787.]

‡ Art. 3. [Ibid. p. 529. col. 2.]

§ Richard. in Sent. l. 2. Dist. 27. art. 2. q. 3.

|| Nich. d'Orb. in Sent. l. 2. Dist. 27. [ut supra.]

¶ Hos. Confess. Petrico, c. 73. p. 141.

** P. Burg. addit. ad Lyræ in Ps. 35.

the ordinary assistance of grace, merit eternal life *ex condigno*, and therefore the mercy of God is most seen in heaven."

However the reputation of Aquinas might gain upon some, yet this was very far then from being a catholic tradition.

But no Council ever interposed its authority in this matter, till the Council of Trent, which resolved to carry the points in difference to the height, and to establish every thing that was questioned. Nothing had been more easy than to have given satisfaction in this matter, considering what Pighius and Contarenus, and even Genebrard, had yielded in it; but there the rule was, that every thing that was disputed, must be determined first, and then defended.

And so it hath happened with this decree, which, lest we should think the matter capable of softening, hath been since asserted in the highest manner. Bellarmine* asserts "good works of themselves, and not merely by compact, to be meritorious of eternal life, so that in them there is a certain proportion and equality to eternal life."

Costerus† saith, "that in works of grace, there is an equality between the work and the reward."

Suarez,‡ "that they have an intrinsical dignity whereby they become worthy of eternal life."

Vasquez,§ "that there is an equality of dignity between good works and eternal life, without which, a promise could not make true merit."

The Rhemists say,|| "that good works are truly and properly meritorious, and justly worthy of everlasting life; and that thereupon heaven is the just due, and just stipend, crown or recompense, which God by his justice oweth to the persons so doing by his grace."

And again, "that good works are meritorious, and the very cause of salvation, so far that God should be unjust, if he rendered not heaven for the same."¶

Phil. Gamachæus,** a late professor of divinity in the Sorbonne, speaks it roundly, that the Council of Trent did

* Bell. de Justif. l. 5. c. 17. [ut supra.]

† Coster. Enchirid. p. 294. [Colon. 1599.]

‡ Suarez. de Grat. l. 12. c. 1. n. 18. [vol. 8. p. 395. col. 1. Venet. 1741.]

§ Vasquez in 1. 2. Disp. 213. c. 5.

|| Rhemists on 2 Tim. iv. 8. [fol. 389. p. 2. Lond. 1589.]

¶ On Heb. vi. 8. [10.] [Ibid. fol. 402. p. 2.]

** Gamach. in 1. 2. Th. Q. 114. c. 2. Concil. 2. Omnes Catholici fatentur justos suis bonis operibus mereri gloriam de condigno.

plainly mean to establish merit *ex condigno*, and that all Catholics are agreed in it.

The last defender of the Council of Trent within these few years, saith, "that there is an intrinsical condignity in good works, whereby they bear a proportion commensurate with the glory of heaven. And without such doctrine as this, he doth not think the Council of Trent can be defended in this matter."*

If, after all, it be said, that this is a mere subtilty concerning the proportion an act of grace bears to the state of glory ; I answer, the more to blame they, who have made and imposed it as a matter of faith, as the Council of Trent has done with an anathema, and that without any pretence from catholic tradition.

But what made the Council of Trent so much concerned for a scholastic subtilty ? There was a deep mystery lay in this ; they were wise enough to frame the decree so as to avoid offence, and to make it appear plausible, but it was enough to the people to understand that the merit of good works was allowed, and they were to believe the priests, both as to the good works they were to do, and as to the putting them into a state of grace, to make them capable of meriting. And this was the true reason of the anathema, against those who should deny the true merit of good works.

* Aug. Reding Defens. Conc. Trident. Tr. 4. sect. 2. ad Sess. 6. c. 1.

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